

Anna Christine Marr

A No-
Nonsense
Guide To
DEMONS

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Demons always lie.

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Introduction

As a counselor who specializes in psychological and spiritual trauma, I have a lot of sympathy for how hard it is to find real help once you start getting harassed by malicious supernatural beings. Whether you went looking for trouble or trouble came looking for you, once demons latch onto you as one of their favorite targets of torment, the situation can quickly become terrifying.

Regardless of what your current religious beliefs are, I can teach you how to respond to supernatural beings wisely, and I can help you steer clear of common mistakes. As is often the case on spiritual matters, the popular advice on how to handle demons is the *wrong* advice. This means that you can pack up the crosses, Bibles, holy water and any other talismans that you might have been given. Physical props are quite useless when you're dealing with the supernatural.

I decided to write this book because there is a desperate need for sound spiritual advice to be more readily available on a global scale. If you take the principles I explain to heart, they can quite literally save your soul.

PART I: ESSENTIALS

1. Getting Started

If you're having demon problems, then you're already feeling stressed, so let's start with some good news: *You don't need the help of other humans to get your demon troubles sorted.* In fact, most of the poor priests who get dragged into these affairs don't have the foggiest notion what they ought to do, so they just follow the steps in an utterly useless manual that they've been given by their superiors. It's not their fault that they don't know how to advise you; they've simply never been taught. The truth about demons tends to be a well-kept secret while useless theatrics are heavily promoted as insta-cures that will send even the buffest bad spirit packing. The good news for you is that you really don't need some kind of shaman to show up at your door and perform magic rituals. Despite what many bloated egos will tell you, you really aren't spiritually inferior to the self-proclaimed demon "experts." Even if you've never prayed to God in your life and even if you don't know who God is, you can still become very wise very fast on spiritual matters. All you need is a willingness to learn and some well-placed trust.

A Willingness To Learn

Supernatural entities are not humans, which means learning how they operate will require an open mind. To learn how to respond to demons wisely, you need a basic education about their nature, agenda, and abilities. But you can't deal with demons wisely if demons are the only ones you're focusing on. To really start making wise spiritual choices, you must also learn about *God*.

Well-Placed Trust

Perhaps you think that there is no God. Well, there is. God is real, God is powerful, and God is very much involved in your demon troubles. I could have eased you into these facts instead of dishing

them so bluntly, but let's not waste time dancing about the truth. We all start off as complete ignoramuses on the topic of supernatural beings. If you're going to become spiritually wise, you have to get comfortable with being wrong—especially in the early stages of learning when you will discover that a lot of the stuff you thought you knew turns out to be hooey.

If you were raised in a religious community, I can guarantee that much of what you've been taught about supernatural beings is a bunch of guff. It doesn't matter what religion you were or are a fan of; none of them get it right. Some get closer than others, but they're all missing too many critical points to properly help folks with serious demon problems. As a spiritual counselor, it would sure make my job a lot easier if there was already a handy accurate guidebook that I could refer people to for help with spiritual issues. But there's not, so here we are.

I care too much about you to leave you strung out with folks who are going to lead you astray on an issue as serious as the well-being of your soul. Yet if I'm going to help you properly, I need to teach you a lot of important concepts, beginning with this very critical rule: ***never trust a human to teach you about non-human beings.***

I am a human, and yet here I am talking as if I'm some kind of authority on the subject of supernatural entities. If alarm bells aren't already ringing in your brain, they should be. By now you should be asking yourself, "Who is this woman and where did she get her information from?"

At this point you have no idea how I know what I know. All you can do is take my word for where I got my information from, and that's really not a smart idea. The internet today is overloaded with folks who just can't wait to tell you how anointed they are, what their latest prophetic vision was, and how every word they type is God-breathed. Should you be impressed by pompous talk and fancy titles? No, you shouldn't.

Suppose I tell you that your mother loves broccoli, but you know for a fact that your mother hates broccoli. Does it matter who I say my source is? If I say that your mother told me she loves broccoli, you'll know that I'm either lying or that your mother was intentionally

deceiving me. If I say that *God* told me your mother loves broccoli, then you'll know I'm either delusional, or *God* is intentionally deceiving me for some reason. The point is that as far as you're concerned, my source doesn't matter. All that should matter to you is whether or not what I'm saying is true. This same principle applies in teachings about the supernatural. The things I'm going to tell you in this book about God and demons are either true or false. It doesn't matter how I came by this information or how I *think* I came by this information. You really shouldn't be concerned about who I am or what my personal background is. You should only be focused on figuring out if what I'm telling you is true. If it is, then hooray, this book is a winner. If it turns out I'm delusional, then you've got yourself some good kindling for a fire.

God is the only Authority on God. Being the Creator and Sustainer of all that exists, God is also the only Authority on demons, humans, and every other topic you could ever want to know about. What this means is that God is your *only* reliable Source for verifying the truth about anything. If you want to know if what I tell you about God is true, then you need to *ask Him yourself*. Don't ask someone else to speak to God on your behalf, because the second key to getting wise about supernatural beings is: ***always deal with God directly.***

How To Talk To God

Some of you feel like you've got the whole prayer thing down, no sweat. Others of you don't have any idea how to strike up a conversation with some invisible alien Being who you've never met. Since your personal relationship with God is so vital to your spiritual well-being, I'm going to give you a quick overview of how prayer works.

Suppose you're in a crowded restaurant and you want to get the attention of your friend Jen. So you call out "Hey, Jen, over here!" Everyone in the restaurant hears you, but everyone can also tell that you're not talking to them, you're talking to Jen.

Now some of you are thinking, "But I don't have a name for God, so how do I start a prayer?"

Names don't matter. To begin a prayer to God, first think about who it is you want to communicate with. You don't want some not-quite-ultimate supernatural something. You want God Almighty. The Fellow at the very top. The Creator of all that is. With that focus in mind, simply saying, "Hi, there," will do just fine. You see, God isn't interested in you using a bunch of fancy words and formalities when you talk to Him. God is a fan of *honesty*, *sincerity*, and *reverence*. **Reverence** is a fancy word for respect—the kind of respect you'd give someone who has so much clout that he could royally mess up your life in a matter of seconds. In many ancient cultures, if the king decided that he didn't like you, he could order someone to kill you on the spot and you'd be dead. God has that kind of power and a whole lot more, so clearly He deserves respect. But you can respect someone without using a bunch of "Thees" and "Thous." God wants honesty from you, and that is best accomplished when you don't try to act like you're someone else in your conversations with Him.

Prayer is a massive topic, and I don't want to get bogged down in deep mechanics when the goal of this book is to help you sort out your demon problems. But there are a few basics that you need to understand so that you can get comfortable with this whole "talking to my Maker" thing.

Prayer Language

When humans talk to each other, words are very important. We are very limited creatures who can't read each other's thoughts. If I just stare at you intensely, you'll have no idea what I'm thinking and you'll probably feel creeped out. If we're going to have a productive conversation, we must both make an effort to translate what we're feeling and wanting into clear, audible sounds.

Talking to God is an entirely different affair than talking to humans. Talking to God is far simpler, because He doesn't need you to use words. To God, your deepest, most complex feelings are as plain as the nose on your face. God already knows you far better than you know yourself. We humans often find our own behavior confusing. We often feel conflicted and stressed for reasons that we

can't fully explain to ourselves or anyone else. But to God, we always make perfect sense.

Since God already knows you through and through, He never misunderstands what you're trying to say to Him. God is the One who created every form of communication there is, and that includes words and body language. Using words when you're talking to God is a good way of helping *yourself* focus on what you're doing, but God understands you just fine without you trying to convert your complex feelings and desires into audible sounds.

The Purpose of Prayer

People often ask: "If God already knows what I'm thinking, why should I bother talking to Him?" This question assumes that the purpose of prayer is to *inform God*: to catch Him up on the latest news about you and world events. And yet God already knows everything about everything, so there is never a need to *inform* Him.

The purpose of prayer is to *relate* to God. Why do you hang out with a friend who you already know very well? Why do you bring up how you feel about your job when your spouse already knows how you feel? Why do you say things like, "I really love steak," when your friend already knows this about you? *The exchange of new information* is not what close relationships are about. Close relationships are about *communing* with someone: to enjoy the freedom of being able to safely share intimate parts of yourself and to enjoy the comfort of being known and valued.

All humans want to feel known and understood. The fact that other people can't read our minds makes us feel distant from them. Even our best friends feel distant when we sense that they don't really identify with the complex feelings we're experiencing. Because God is the only Being who knows you completely, your relationship with Him has the potential to satisfy you in ways that human relationships just can't. The more you understand about how God views you, the more you can enjoy the feeling of being fully understood, heard, and even *liked* by a mega-powerful Entity.

While humans have a very limited attention span, God is never too busy or distracted to listen to what you want to say. The theory

that God listens to some people more than others is a myth that is based on the assumption that God finds it taxing to absorb information, so He prioritizes who He listens to in order to conserve His resources. But remember: *God is not a human*. He *understands* our limitations and perspectives, but He doesn't *share* them. What would be tiresome and draining for humans is effortless for God. God doesn't have a physical body that gets tired. He doesn't need sleep to reboot His brain. He doesn't struggle to stay focused.

When you look around this world, everything you see is something that God made just because He wanted to. God doesn't answer to anyone, and He can't be forced to do what He doesn't want to do. When you look around the world, you can see that God loves variety. He intentionally made some things that are simple and other things that are complex. You can learn a lot about God by looking at the things He creates. When you see how much variation there is in this world, it can help you understand why God isn't put off by simple language or simple thoughts. God doesn't just listen to the people who use fancy words when they pray. He doesn't favor people based on their social status or the size of their egos. God listens to *you* with the same interest that He listens to the pastor of the mega church or the famous miracle healer or the super evangelist. God doesn't surround Himself with supernatural secretaries that you must pass messages through instead of talking to Him directly. God always wants you to go direct.

Many religions teach you that it's disrespectful or wrong to talk to God directly. You're either taught that God considers you too inferior to bother with or you're taught that there is a hierarchy of heavenly human handlers that you must work your way through. *Saints* are supposed to be dead humans who God really likes, so now they have a lot of clout in Heaven and if you approach them properly, they'll plead your case to God as if they are your heavenly lawyers. *Angels* are supernatural beings who are often promoted as God's elite servants, bodyguards, and prayer screeners, so once again you have to talk to a middleman and hope he bothers to patch your message through. All of this is a total hokey, and the sooner you chuck the notion that you need some kind of intercessor to act as your representative, the better off you'll be. In dealing with God,

always go direct. Not only is this the way He wants it, but by going direct, you'll keep your focus where it needs to be.

A Starting Prayer

If you've never talked to God in your life, here's a good first prayer: *"God, please help me know who You are, what You want from me, and how I can get into a good relationship with You."* A prayer like this is simple, direct, and honest.

If you're already comfortable with prayer, then before you go any further in this book you need to pray something like this: *"God, please show me if there is any truth in this book that I'm reading. If there is, help me to apply the information in a way that will please You."*

God is the only Authority on supernatural beings, so unless you're asking for His feedback, you're not going to have any way of knowing if I'm teaching you guff or not. Asking God for His feedback is helpful for two reasons: first, it reminds you where truth comes from, and second, it is a way for you to practice the soul attitudes of *reverence* and *submission*.

The Four Essential Soul Attitudes

If you want to develop a good relationship with your Creator, there are four soul attitudes that you need to cultivate. They are *reverence*, *submission*, *dependency* and *trust*.

Reverence is a respect for God that is based on the understanding that He outranks you in every way. To God, creating an entire universe from nothing is child's play, while to you, assembling a 1500 piece jigsaw puzzle that someone else made is so taxing that you have to keep taking rest breaks. In this world we admire people who can run really fast or do complex math formulas or hold their breath for many seconds or remember long strings of numbers. If we are impressed by such simple things, we should be super impressed by God. In this world we keep a respectful distance from electric fences that we know can give us a painful jolt, or from agitated looking men who are armed with big guns. If we're going to respect things and beings who can harm us in this world, we should

be extremely respectful of a God who could blow this entire planet apart with a single thought.

Submission is a soul attitude which is a lot easier to cultivate once you've got some *reverence* flowing. Submission is when your soul says to God, "What You want is more important than what I want." In this world, we do what we don't want to do in order to please people whose opinions matter to us. You'd rather watch the sports game, but you stop and do the dishes for your wife just to please her. You don't want to waste a Saturday at a boring social event, but you go with your friend because you know it would mean a lot to her and you want her to like you. The people we really care about pleasing are people who have the power to give us things that we really want and need. Your spouse can give you affirmation. Your boss can give you a raise. As the Creator and Sustainer of all that exists, God controls your quality of life in this world, He determines when and how you will die, and He decides what will happen to you after you die. Will you just cease to exist or will you suddenly find yourself in another sort of world?

Many religions teach that death is not the end of our existence, it's merely a transition to a different sort of environment where we will either be really happy or really unhappy. We can theorize about what will happen when we die, but one thing is for sure: whatever happens to us will be God's decision. Once you understand the central role God is playing in everything that happens to you, you can see why it is in your own best interest to do anything you can to maintain a positive relationship with this Being who has chosen to remain so involved in your personal business. Here is where submission comes in.

God is a very intelligent, purposeful Being, and He has reasons for everything that He does, including His decision to create you. Just why did God create you? Is there something that He wants you to do? Does He have a particular idea about who He wants you to become? These are important questions, and your best chance at getting answers to them is to approach God with *respect* and a *willingness to treat His agenda as more important than yours*.

In this world, group members are expected to submit to the will of their group leader. God is the Leader in your relationship with

Him. Sometimes you'll really disagree with the way God is handling things or with something He's telling you to do. In those moments, *submitting* to God by treating His agenda as more important than your own will always be the wise response.

While the soul attitude of *reverence* is really just a logical response to the fact that God is awesome and you're not, the soul attitude of **dependency** is a logical response to realizing that you can't do anything without God's help because you literally depend on Him to keep your molecules organized. As a human, you're a complex puzzle of zillions upon zillions of microscopic parts that have been put together just so to form the masterpiece of you. But why don't your pieces fall out the way the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle do when you grab the thing by the edges and try to lift it into the air? God is the One keeping you tacked together. God is the One ensuring that when you go to sleep at night, your molecules don't spread out over the top of your mattress until you are no longer a recognizable shape.

This world is like a mental fantasy that God is choosing to run in His mind right now. At any moment, He could suddenly decide that He's over this human project and we'd all cease to be. This puts us in a very bizarre position with God, and it's hard to get our minds around just how dependent we are on Him to sustain our existence. But the more you understand the way things really are, the more you can see why it's so absurd when people boast about doing things in their own strength, or take the credit for wisdom that God has given them. If we can't even exist without God sustaining us, then clearly we don't deserve all of the glory for what we accomplish in this world, because He is the One who made those accomplishments possible.

Dependency is a soul attitude that says, "*I can't do anything apart from You.*" The more you develop this particular soul attitude, the more *humble* you will become. Real **humility** is a soul attitude that says, "*Because I can't do anything apart from You, I don't deserve the glory for what I accomplish.*" People with this attitude are uncomfortable with being worshiped and applauded for the things that they do, because they feel like they're being credited for God's work while He is being ignored. Cruise about on the internet

and you'll notice that many self-proclaimed "experts" on supernatural beings are putting a lot of time and effort into exalting themselves and letting everyone know how impressive they are. Where there is a lack of humility, there is a lack of dependency. Where there is a lack of dependency, there is someone who is quite delusional about his own abilities, and very out of touch with the abilities of God. Focusing on the four essential soul attitudes will help you get better at recognizing bad spiritual advisors. You really don't want to be taking spiritual advice from someone who doesn't understand who God is, or who is making foolish spiritual choices in their own lives. Embracing the four essential soul attitudes is the only appropriate way to respond to a being as powerful and capable as God.

Trust is the last essential soul attitude that you should be familiar with. Trust is when your soul assumes that God is for you, not against you, and that He has positive motivations for whatever He's doing in your life. In other words, you decide to give God the benefit of the doubt.

If your man comes home smelling of women's perfume, do you leap to the assumption that he's being unfaithful, or do you assume there is an innocent explanation? Which assumption you choose will be determined by what you believe about your man's moral character, his personal value of you, and your own insecurities. Many people find it impossible to trust God in the early stages of their relationship with Him. Others start off feeling like they trust God quite a bit until He does something that really upsets them. Developing trust in God is a process that requires a lot of time and the chance to experience Him interacting with you in a variety of ways. Many people find trust to be the hardest soul attitude to cultivate of the four I've listed here, but that's alright, because focusing on the other three soul attitudes will set you up in a very good position to deal with demons wisely.

Let's summarize what we've learned so far. Because God is infinitely more powerful than you, He has the ability to greatly harm you, therefore you ought to **revere** Him. Because God outranks you in every area, you ought to **submit** to Him. Because God literally holds your molecules together, you should acknowledge your

dependency on Him instead of pretending that you are the captain of your own ship. And once you have time to learn more about who He is and how He personally views you, you'll have the chance to practice **trusting** Him.

Now that we've covered the four essential soul attitudes and now that you've taken the time to ask God to show you if there is anything of value being said in this book, we are ready to move on to the first critical principle in dealing with demons: ***understanding the power structure.***

2. Power Structures

God loves variety and when He made demons and humans, He set those two kinds of creatures up with some very different abilities. Once demons start hassling you, you will quickly discover that of all of their abilities, the thing you care most about is *their ability to harm you*. Demons are very good at terrorizing human beings. They also have the ability to inflict very real and severe harm on our bodies, minds, and souls. But demons *don't* have infinite abilities, and understanding some of their limitations will help you keep a grip on your calm when they are trying to upset you.

Humans who try to advise you about demons generally fall into two camps: those who want to help you cultivate positive relationships with demons (eg, sorcerers), and those who want to help you trounce all over them (eg, Christians). ***Neither goal is attainable.*** You cannot buddy up to demons, and you can't prevent them from ever hassling you again. If you want to become wise in spiritual matters, you need to set realistic expectations and be willing to accept some unpleasant truths.

There is a power structure between God, demons, and humans which you need to understand. On the following charts, each being listed has the ability to greatly harm all of the beings listed *below* them, but they are powerless to harm the beings who are listed *above* them.

The Correct Power Structure

Depicting the Power to Harm

> GOD <
> DEMONS <
> HUMANS <

As you can see, we humans are at the bottom of the power structure. Naturally our egos want to reject this idea, but the truth about power doesn't change to suit our personal preferences. It is God who set up this structure, and as you can see, He intentionally

gave demons a major advantage over us. Before you decide that this is cause for despair, remember the concept of **dependency** that I discussed in the last chapter. Demons are as dependent on God as humans are, which means that *demons cannot do anything to you without God's help*. While this might sound alarming at first, it's actually very good news, because it reduces demons to mere tools that God uses to shape your experiences in life.

Occult Power Structures

There are many religious beliefs and philosophical theories that promote a different power structure than the correct one. When you hear humans boasting of how they were able to get such-and-such spirit to do their bidding or when you see humans on the internet posting spells that are supposed to force the universe (aka, God) to align with their personal agendas, one of these power structures is being promoted:

Common Occult Power Structures

A	B
> HUMANS < > GOD & DEMONS <	> DEMONS < > HUMANS <
C	
> DEMONS & HUMANS < > GOD <	

Sorcery comes packaged under many names, but it always boils down to the same basic notion of humans getting their hands on supernatural power. In systems that promote the idea that we are all born with supernatural power “hibernating” within us, Structure A is being used. In this structure, our egos are thrilled at the notion that we are born with innate supernatural abilities and can evolve into mega powerful beings who can get all other supernatural entities to do our bidding. These systems often promote the idea of large

pantheons of demonic deities, with the real God getting lost in the shuffle.

In systems where humans are described as having the chops to wield supernatural power like a magical sword even though such power will never be innate, Structure B is in play. Spirit guides are often an important concept here, as you must get some angel or “the Light” to teach you how to learn enough tricks to make Harry Potter sweat. Here spirits are viewed as permanently more potent than we are, yet if we sufficiently impress them with our reverential worship, they will share some of their secrets with us. Meanwhile, God doesn’t really have a place in this system. Instead, the focus is on satiating our greedy lust for power.

In Structure C, humans and demons can mutually harm each other. This system allows for humans to have innate power which they can then get in touch with by cultivating “the god within.” After that, it’s all about working your way up through the ranks. When you’re just getting started, there will be other more potent sorcerers and spirits who can trounce you. But as you move up the ranks like a karate student earning belts of different colors, you’ll find that you can grind more spirits and sorcerers under your heel.

It’s useful to note that when sorcery systems do acknowledge the existence of the Christian Deity Jesus, they tend to view Him as an enemy, not a friend.

Christian Power Structures

The many branches of Christianity *talk* a good game about God being a Supreme Deity, but in *practice*, Christians often treat God like their partner and/or subordinate instead of their master. Don’t be impressed with the lyrics of worship songs that wax on about how great God is. Listen instead to the way Christians *pray* and you’ll quickly discover that they think merely tossing the Name of Jesus around is a surefire way to make God do whatever they want.

Popular Power Structures in Christianity

A	B
> GOD & HUMANS < > DEMONS <	> GOD < > HUMANS < > DEMONS <
C	
> HUMANS < > GOD & DEMONS <	

In Structure A, the attitude is that humans can partner up with God and co-run the world with Him. **Reverence, submission, and dependency** are sorely lacking and a very low opinion of God's wisdom, intelligence, and methods makes **trust** impossible to cultivate. Christians subscribing to this structure often feel it is vital to keep God *informed* about what's going on in the world, and to *instruct* Him on the best ways to go about things. God is often depicted as being vexed and grieved over the state of the world and the general depravity of humans. When this first structure is being used, prayer is primarily used as a tool for *fixing problems* and keeping God on task by using the power of nag (this is when groups of Christians get together and make the same request of God over and over again until He finally does what they want). *Communing with God* tends to be a lost concept here.

In Structure B, there is some **reverence** for God, but our **dependency** on Him is severely downplayed as Christians view themselves as capable of handling their demon problems without God's direct help. A popular belief here is that God (specifically, Jesus) imparts miraculous powers to us at the time that He "saves" or accepts us. The Christian Bible is viewed as a powerful book of incantations which can be hauled out and used to neutralize demons whenever needed. Holy water, crosses, and verbal utterances of the Name of Jesus are also considered powerful talismans that God has given us so that we will be well equipped to handle our demon problems. When this second structure is the focus, turning to God

directly at the time of a demonic attack isn't considered necessary—all that's really needed is to correctly employ the tools that God has already given to us.

When it comes to YouTube videos of exorcists strutting their stuff in front of a live audience and self-anointed fatheads on the internet who are lugging around absurdly dramatic titles like “prophetic intercessor” and emphatically telling you (often in ALL CAPS) how to raise prayer walls and crush demonic strongholds, Structure C is the one being used. As you can see, this structure vaults humans to the top of the pile, which is why folks subscribing to this view tend to be so obnoxiously self-exalting. The soul attitudes of **reverence, submission, dependency** and **trust** are encouraged, but with certain *humans* being promoted as the appropriate recipients of these things, not God. This is where you'll find “anointed” leaders promising to call down Divine curses on anyone who refuses to revere and submit to them. Among this crowd it's commonly taught there are certain “chosen” individuals who *you* must depend on to get God to pay any mind to you. Deliverance ministers are a common example here, with the main idea of deliverance being that *your* prayers aren't going to cut it, so you need to call on someone more spiritually potent to make God service your needs. Healers and exorcists work well with this structure when their shtick is to treat Jesus Christ like their personal pit bull that they can sic on demons and ailments whenever they want. The exorcist doesn't *ask* Jesus to throw demons out of someone: instead, *he* commands the demons to leave *in the Name of Jesus*. In filmed exorcist showdowns (which are usually pre-rehearsed shams) you'll find that the demons usually act more scared of the *human exorcist* than they are of God.

When Jesus' Name is thrown about by this third group, it's a case of humans *commanding God* to do something. In Structure B, God is perceived as having already signed off on us using certain magic talismans at will, and some of the humans operating under that structure at least respect God for being the One who originally infused their talismans with power. But in Structure C, there is no reverence for God. He is treated as the mere underling of humans:

a powerful yet pathetic lackey who has no choice but to obey superior humans who are constantly bossing Him about.

Notice how in Structure C, God and demons are placed on the same level, indicating that they can mutually harm each other. When you see images of Jesus weeping over the earth and mankind's general depravity, or when you hear people talking about Satan and his minions pulling off feats against God's will, Structure C is being promoted. According to this belief system, God is often being thwarted, stressed, and oppressed by demons, and therefore He literally depends on us humans (well, at least the super holy among us) to step up and save Him from His powerful enemies.

The Correct Power Structure

Now that we've waded through all of that guff, let's get back to the way things actually work.

The Correct Power Structure

Depicting the Power to Harm

➤ **GOD** <
➤ **DEMONS** <
➤ **HUMANS** <

In the correct power structure, God is at the top, demons are second, and we humans are on the very bottom. To help us stay in touch with just how impotent we are, God has set us up in a world that is filled with animals, plants, and environments that could easily wipe us out. One bite from a mosquito and we can contract a deadly disease. One nip from a poisonous snake, and we could die in agony. One swat from a wild bear and half of our face could be torn off. We humans really are sad sacks in the power department. Even with all of the toys we make to try to compensate for our lack of natural defenses, we still get bested all too often by creatures who just can't be held off by bullets and knives. Confining us to a world in which we are surrounded by danger on all sides is God's way of helping us to develop that essential soul attitude of **dependency**.

Without God's help, we are utterly defenseless. With God's help we could, theoretically, be quite invincible. Here is where many

humans start salivating at the idea of somehow finding a way to control when and how God will come to their aid. But the assumption that God is willing to play the part of our obedient servant is a very wrong assumption to make. If God isn't willing to *submit* to *us* by taking an attitude of "What the humans want is more important than what I want," then where does that leave us?

Straining our brains to find a way to box God into a corner is a waste of time. He'll help us when it pleases Him to do so, and not before. While you should never rule out the possibility that God might help you in a way that is jaw-dropping miraculous, you *can* assume that He isn't going to allow you to permanently dwell in a happy cocoon of bliss where demons can't touch you. Your life in this world *will* have hardships and many of those hardships are going to be amplified by demons. Well, rats. That's a depressing thought, right? Is this really all there is for us to look forward to: hardships and hassles with a God who only sometimes helps us in the way that we want to be helped? Happily, things are brighter than this, but to understand why, we need to try to see things from God's point of view.

3. The Human Project

Suppose you are a writer and you're sitting in your home office, rapping your fingers on your desk, trying to decide what your next book should be about. It has to have an exciting plot, because you can't stand boring stories. Behind you is a floor to ceiling bookshelf that contains all of the books you've already written and published. Romance, horror, mystery, suspense, comedy, drama—all of the genres are well represented because you're just that talented. So what should you write about *this* time?

When God came up with the human story, it wasn't His first creation effort. He dreamt up countless worlds before ours, and He's currently running countless stories alongside of ours. Understanding this about God can help you understand why He doesn't consider it a bad thing that He has woven such a strong theme of *suffering* into our particular story.

The presence of sorrow, pain, and evil in our world is one of the things that sends most religions fleeing into the cheerful land of denial, where we all sit around pretending that evil was one big whoops and God didn't really mean for this whole thing to go south. Many religions weave this kind of theme into their creation stories—the ones that attempt to explain how everything that is came to be in the first place. If you try to pin Christians down into an explanation of why there is so much evil in this world, you'll find that they will always assign the blame onto humans, Satan, or both. Christians are taught that it's a terrible thing to acknowledge that everything we hate about this place only exists because God put it there. The problem with denying **the sovereignty of God** like this is that you end up forced to abandon the correct power structure.

If God is really at the top (which He is), then there is no one who can override Him, thwart Him, or mess up His plans. And yet to hear Christians tell it, God originally planned for the human project to be a story of endless bliss, but humans and demons worked together to permanently ruin His dream. God remained stupefied about this depressing turn of events for thousands of years before He came up

with Jesus Christ, who then died on a cross as a way of giving humans a way to at least find joy in the next life, even though this place was already a lost cause.

Remember that I warned you that much of what you've been taught about God and demons is going to turn out to be a bunch of rubbish.

A Redemptive Story

It turns out that Christianity (and every other religion) has it wrong. The world we live in is *supposed to be* this screwed up. You're not looking at a failed project, you're looking at a project that God considers to be rolling along delightfully well. You see, God decided to make the human story a *redemptive* story. In redemptive stories, things start off fine, then everything falls apart rather unexpectedly, then there is a lot of struggle and strain before things finally reach a point where they were even better than before. *Personal evolution* is the big theme in redemptive stories: you watch the main characters grow and change and become remarkably better people thanks to all of the hardships they've been through. This is how redemptive stories work, and because we humans were designed to thrive in redemptive stories, we find them very inspirational. Humanity's favorite heroes are usually folks who have been through a lot of hard knocks yet managed to mature into people who are a shining examples of grace and wisdom.

In redemptive stories, the folks who thrive are the ones who set their minds on becoming better people for the things they have to go through. They take a stance of "What doesn't kill you can make you better," and they refuse to accept the idea that life is one long, pointless series of repetitive motions. They look for big picture lessons in the things that they go through. In the face of loss, they learn to develop a greater appreciation for what they have. In the face of cruelty they learn the importance of mercy. In the face of suffering, they learn the value of compassion. In short, the heroes in redemptive stories focus on *personal development*. Accepting that they can't control their circumstances, they make it their goal to glean some positive growth lesson from those circumstances so that

even if the world is falling apart around them, they themselves will be growing and thriving. This is the same mindset that God will teach *you* to have if you are willing to listen to Him, and it is this mindset that will radically change the way you are impacted by demonic harassment.

You are not like a figurine that is created and then set on a store shelf as a complete and finished product. You are more like a seed that is packed with the potential to grow into something complex and fabulous. Just as some seeds are designed to turn into flowering bushes and others are designed to turn into fruit trees, God designed *you* with a specific end goal in mind. He has already determined what your “ideal self” will be, and who He has designed *you* to be is different than who He designed someone else to be. Now that the raw materials are in place, what you need to develop them is a bunch of carefully constructed life experiences.

The many experiences that God pours into your life are like the water, sunshine, and fertilizer that are given to a seed to help it grow. Now suppose the seed has the option to sit there in the dirt and think, “Stuff this program! The world is a dark, dank place and I’m not falling for the lie that I’ll find anything better if I stretch out enough to poke my head through the surface of the ground!” So the seed refuses to use any of the nutrients being given to him and he sits in the ground until till he rots. This is an option that God gives to all of us. We can choose to be stubborn seeds.

Of course the smarter option would be to look around at the dark, dank soil we’re pushed down into and say, “Well, this is certainly not my idea of a paradise, but God says that if I’ll cooperate with His maturity program, He has big plans for me.” And then we’d start looking to God for help in how to use the nutrients that He keeps sending our way.

Growth Opportunities

From God’s perspective, the events that happen to you in life are strategically planned and timed to lay the groundwork for you to develop into the being He has designed you to be. Sometimes you will have the option to choose how you will respond to an experience

—like when the neighbor tries to get to know you and you decide to shun or encourage him. Other times, experiences are forced upon you without you getting a chance to avoid them, like when a car suddenly drives up onto a public sidewalk and hits you. Events that we have no say in are often negative, and we instinctively react with anger and feel that a great injustice has been done to us. And yet to God, these events are like the keys that unlock doors to rooms He wants you to gain access to: rooms which contain valuable treasures for you to find if you are willing to explore them.

At first we don't share God's enthusiasm for perpetual growth. We humans don't like pain, we don't like hassle, and we don't like having major plot twists suddenly sprung upon us so frequently. Many of us feel we'd be much better off being characters in a blissful story instead of a redemptive one. And yet as creatures, we simply didn't get to vote on what kind of story God would plunk us down in. The good news is that He has intentionally designed us to thrive in this kind of story. We are highly adaptable and resilient creatures who are able to recover from all manner of hardships. We are also capable of continuous learning. All of these skills are essential to being able to thrive in a redemptive story, and God certainly didn't have to equip us so well. God doesn't *have* to do *anything*. He could have made us a part of some dark horror story in which hope and joy were not even concepts.

Dealing with God is an entirely different thing than dealing with another human being. God doesn't owe us anything, and there is no moral code that He is held accountable to in His dealings with us. In your relationship with God, you aren't His equal, partner, or buddy. You are His *creature*, and learning to settle comfortably into that kind of role takes time. This is why I started this book by explaining the four essential soul attitudes: because focusing on cultivating those attitudes towards God will really help you approach Him correctly, and the sooner you learn how to approach Him, the sooner you will be able to benefit from your demon problems.

Demonic Harassment

From God's perspective, allowing demons to harass you can be extremely beneficial to your spiritual development, and to the development of your personal relationship with Him. In fact, a fear of demons is often what motivates humans to seek God in the first place and to become receptive to the possibility that there might actually be a mega powerful Being out there who is running this whole show. While there are countless lessons you can learn from being hassled by other *humans*, having supernatural beings on your case has a way of intensifying the lessons, accelerating growth, and prompting you to ask questions that you wouldn't normally ask.

Demons have a very different perspective of things than God does, and they really don't share His enthusiasm for seeing you thrive as one of His creatures. When demons come after you, their intentions are quite malicious. Now that we've had a chance to discuss God's perspective of humans, it's time to learn about how *demons* view us. As you might already be suspecting based on their treatment of you: demons *enjoy* messing with us.

4. The Demonic Agenda

The first thing to understand about demons is that they think you're a moron. You and every other human on the planet. From where demons are sitting, we are such gullible dopes who are easier to con than a four-year-old who readily accepts that Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny actually exist. The second thing to realize about demons is that they find it *so fun* to mess with us. Demons are very sadistic creatures in that they truly *enjoy* seeing other creatures suffer. For demons, watching you freak out is like watching a very entertaining movie. But just as you get bored watching the same show all of the time, demons also get bored and like to mix up their entertainment.

There are many ways to vex humans. There are short games and long games. Demons love it all. But demons also love using theatrics and complex deception to take us down. Underestimating the craftiness of demons is the first mistake humans make in dealing with them.

The exorcist thinks he's successfully driven evil spirits from the premises when all of the freaky noises stop. It doesn't even occur to him that demons are intentionally falling quiet so that he will misinterpret the situation.

A mother suddenly gets a strong feeling that her child is in danger and assumes it is some kind of sixth sense. She then stays up all night, sick with worry, dreading the moment when the phone will ring with some terrible news. It doesn't even occur to her that demons planted those predictions in her mind just to watch her writhe.

A man is convinced that his estranged father arranged a meeting just to ask him for money, so the son goes into the meeting hostile and defensive, not giving his father a chance to say what's really on his mind. It doesn't even occur to the son that demons have tricked him into sabotaging what could have been a wonderful moment of reconciliation by filling his head with lies.

A woman is convinced that she is a powerful deity when she causes a chair to levitate at her command. It doesn't even occur to her that demons are moving the chair in coordination with her chanting nonsense just to trick her into thinking she has powers that she doesn't really have.

If you think you can outsmart demons, you're wrong. The best you can do is get a whole lot better at recognizing when they are messing with you or someone else. You are just one little human with extremely limited life experience who finds your own internal workings quite mysterious. Demons have thousands of years of experience with studying how humans work and experimenting with various ways to agitate us. Demons also know God better than we do, and they understand God's agenda with us. So when you're dealing with demons, you are outranked, out-powered, out-stealthed, and outsmarted. The only advantage you can hope to gain over them is in the area of spiritual wisdom.

In spite of their impressive abilities, strategic cunning, group coordination, and in-depth understanding of how humans work, demons are spiritual morons. They scoff at the four soul attitudes which are essential to staying on the pleasant side of God's complex personality and cling to the idea that they can succeed at somehow triumphing over God by messing up His human project. Is it really possible for demons to mess up anything of God's? Of course not, but like I said, they're spiritual morons.

A Deeper Agenda

Demons have an agenda with God which directly impacts their agenda with humans. Simply put, they are hoping to stress God by trashing us. Since God obviously likes creating things, and since He is always so purposeful in what He does, demons figure trying to mess up one of God's projects is the best way to get some kind of victory over Him. It's rather like you having an enemy who loves to paint. One day you sneak into your enemy's art studio when he's not around and you trash the painting that he's currently working on. You blob black paint all over it and slice the canvas into ribbons. You're hoping that when your enemy discovers that his project is

ruined, he'll be upset. Since you hate the man, you delight in the thought of inflicting misery on him.

Demons can only attempt to mess up projects that God gives them access to. Since He's given them access to the human project, we are the ones demons are currently obsessed with trashing. But what does it look like to trash the human project? Demons figure the best strategy is to try to get every human to end up in an acrid relationship with God by conning them into cultivating the *opposite* of those four essential soul attitudes. Instead of **reverence**, demons want us to develop an attitude of *mocking disrespect*. Instead of **submission**, they want us to go for *domination*. Instead of **dependency** and **humility**, they want us to go for *autonomy* and a great deal of *arrogance*. Instead of **trust**, they want us to cultivate *suspicion* and *distrust*. Since they know that God has set this up to be a redemptive story, they are hoping to ruin His satisfaction with it by giving it a flat ending.

Some of us can recall seeing a movie in which an innocent character gets such a thorough thrashing that he's reduced to broken bits. Then, instead of the film ending on a high note by showing the main character making some kind of happy turnaround, the guy just gives up and shoots himself. Movies like that are depressing disappointments—especially if we were told going in that it was going to be a redemptive story.

By conning as many individual humans as they can into taking a hostile stance toward God, demons are hoping to make this whole project feel like a flop from where God is sitting. Does their plan *really* have any hope of succeeding? Of course not, but demons are convinced that it does, so this is the strategy that they are committed to carrying out. I won't get into an explanation of why God just isn't crushed by legions of humans spitting in His face, because delving into those reasons will swing us too far off course. All you need to understand at this point is that demons are highly motivated to trash you for reasons that really have nothing to do with you. Just as the wife of a cheating husband attacks his lover as a way of getting revenge on him, demons are attacking us as a way of trying to attack God. He is their ultimate target; we are just a means to an end.

To deal with demons effectively, you have to understand the principles I've been explaining so far. Correctly interpreting demon behavior requires understanding the deeper game they are playing by trying to impact God through the way they interact with us. Spiritual teachings that encourage comradery between demons and humans are based on sheer idiocy. As soon as you think it is possible for you to get demons to *like*, *respect* or *serve* you, you have already been completely snookered by them.

The world is full of humans who honestly think they've worked out some kind of positive partnership with spirits or found ways to successfully manipulate spirits into doing what they want. Until you know the truth about how demons view humans, it's easy to feel intimidated by some arrogant sorcerer who threatens to cast a dark spell on you. It's also easy to be impressed by a medium who claims she can channel the spirits from "the other side." But once you understand that humans are *always* the ones being manipulated by demons, and not the other way around, you start seeing idiocy *everywhere*.

In real life, demons are taking humans down all around you by successfully luring them into all kinds of delusions about who God is, who demons are, and what humans are capable of. Maybe the woman next door actually thinks she's a powerful witch. Maybe the guy down the street thinks he's a potent healer. Obviously the pastor who runs the local church thinks he's God's gift to the earth because he just can't stop bragging about how fast his congregation is growing. If you're racking up the numbers and the online "likes" then you must be on the right track spiritually, right? Remember what I warned you about in the beginning of this book: popular teaching about demons is always *wrong*. If you're going to deal with these creatures wisely, you need a whole new set of discernment skills, and that's what we'll dive into in our next chapter.

5. Discernment Essentials

Spiritual discernment is about being able to tell the difference between *truth* and *malarkey*. On the internet you'll find people using the term "discernment" to mean being able to distinguish between different kinds of spirit beings. This is a particularly popular idea among folks who try to say that every problem humans have in life is being caused by demons. Promoters of this theory simply take some flaw that they see in you—like your lack of faith, or your depression, or your cancer, or your bad attitude (because you don't instantly agree with everything they say), or your stinginess (when it comes to donating to their ministry). They then find a one word summary of your issue and insert it after the phrase "the demon of". Boom, there's your diagnosis. Do you feel sad all of the time? That's because the demon of depression is on your case. Are you hankering for some sex? That's the demon of lust. Are you just diagnosed with cancer? That's the demon of tumors. Are you suicidal? That's the demon of despair. Are you hooked on porn? That's the demon of addiction probably double teaming you with his bestie, the demon of lust. And once these deeply insightful diagnoses have been made by some discernment guru, you get passed off to anointed Brother So-and-So who will inflict a series of rituals on you in order to "deliver" you from all of your demon caused problems.

Deliverance ministry is based on rubbish theology and their claims to be able to tell one spirit from another are absurd. In reality, humans are incapable of distinguishing between different demons, and I'll explain why later on. For now, the important point to understand is that I'm not teaching you the kind of "discernment" people brag about having online. I'm teaching you a *useful* form of spiritual discernment: one that is focused on telling the difference between good teaching and guff so that you can stay on course with cultivating those four essential soul attitudes.

Demons are ace manipulators. The best con artists first study up on their targets, then plan an approach that is tailored to take advantage of whatever vulnerabilities that person has. Demons do the same with humans. When they size you up, they can quickly tell which of the four essential soul attitudes you struggle with the most, and that is the attitude they work on eroding. If your pride balks at the idea of **revering** God, demons encourage you to mock God and downplay His abilities in your mind. If you feel threatened by the idea of **submitting** to God, demons con you into thinking that it's actually more correct to demand that *God* submit to *you*.

I'm frequently using Christians as an example in this book because Christian beliefs have had a massive, global impact on how people view demons. If you're going to learn how to recognize truth, you need to learn how to recognize lies, and there are many Christian beliefs and rituals that are going to steer you down the wrong road if you adopt them. The common Christian approach to prayer gives us a great example to practice discernment with, so let's see how you do.

The Soul Attitudes of Prayer

It's widely taught in Christian circles that you will have the greatest chance of getting God to do what you want if you 1) keep repeating the same request at Him over and over; 2) get as many other Christians as you can to also hammer Him with that same request; 3) make sure some of the Christians in #2 have a lot of sway in the Christian community or at least a fancy title; 4) recite partial passages from the Bible which you've carefully truncated to make it sound like God has already promised to do what you want; 5) throw in a monetary bribe by tossing extra money into your church's offering plate; and 6) make sure you keep up regular church attendance until God capitulates. If you're *really* up against it, there are some emergency rituals you can also throw in such as fasting or getting high ranking Christians to pray out loud for you while resting their hands on your body (aka, the laying on of hands). Emotional prayers are generally considered more potent than calm prayers, so turning on the waterworks is always recommended in dire situations.

But of all these things, the two most important factors in boosting your prayer's effectiveness are *numbers* and *repetition*.

So what's wrong with this approach to prayer?

Whenever you're trying to discern whether a spiritual belief or ritual is good or bad, always start by asking yourself "*How does this idea line up with the four essential attitudes?*" The soul attitude of **submission** says to God, "What You want is more important than what I want, so I will try to accept Your will in my life." When you ask God fifty times in a row for the same thing, are you practicing submission? No, you're practicing the *opposite* of submission, which is **domination**. Domination says, "What I want is all that matters! Give it to me! Do what I want, *now!* Do it, do it, *do it!!* Now, now, *now!!*"

Responding to Demons

Let's apply what we're learning to the situation of demonic harassment. You're relaxing in your room and some *thing* suddenly appears at the foot of your bed. After expressing your initial shock in whatever way is normal to you (gasping, screaming, trembling, hiding under the blankets), what is the correct thing to *do*? Let's form a basic battle plan.

Step 1. Remember the power structure. The *thing* is still there, emanating a super creepy, super powerful aura that is completely freaking you out. This is a very good time to remember who is in charge of the situation. When you are in the presence of a demon who is using this kind of scare tactic, you will instantly feel as helpless as a piece of lint while *it* will seem as dangerous as a sizzling vat of acid. I'll explain how demons pull off these stunts later on. For now, let's focus on what a constructive response would be. The first critical question you need to ask yourself is: *Who is in control of this situation?* Your *emotions* will be screaming that the demon is in charge, because he is obviously a lot more powerful than you are. But here is where you need to remember that *demons always lie*. This demon isn't really as dangerous to you as he wants you to believe. Someone else's power only becomes a threat to you

if they are free to use that power against you whenever and however they want. Demons pulling off dramatic scare tactics always try to convince humans that they are free agents who can do absolutely anything they want. But is this true? Not according to the correct power structure.

The Correct Power Structure

Depicting the Power to Harm

➤ **GOD** <
➤ **DEMONS** <
➤ **HUMANS** <

According to the power structure, who is really in charge as you and *the thing* face off? **God is.** God is at the top of the power structure, which means that God trumps the demon. And by the way, God isn't just a *little* more powerful than demons. He is *infinitely* more powerful. Happily, God also has a bizarre trait called *omnipresence* which means He is always present everywhere. Demons are *not* omnipresent—they want you to think they are, but in reality they operate like an army unit composed of many soldiers. Demons have to keep their guys constantly moving around. They don't have enough resources to have a demon on every human all of the time. Some jobs require multiple demons to pull off, so distributing troops efficiently is a constant challenge. What this means is that the demon currently hovering at the foot of your bed probably just arrived on special assignment. And that assignment was probably something like “Do something dramatic to scare the wits out of the human.” The demon is now waiting to see how you respond. He will then try to use your response against you, and he has many ways of doing this. He would really like you to get so caught up in a reverential fear of *him* that you forget all about God. That would be a nice little erosion of the soul attitude of **reverence**. Another winner would be if you do think of God, but the demon can convince you that God has abandoned you in this moment. You'll no doubt respond with anger, and that will set you up nicely to slide back in the areas of **trust** and **submission**.

According to the power structure, God is the One controlling this situation. What does this mean about where your reverence should be focused? Yes, the demon is super creepy, but compared to God, the demon is as powerful as carpet lint. So who should you be focused on in this moment: the weenie demon or the all-powerful Deity?

Step 2. Focus on God. It's very hard to focus on anything but demons once they show up in a visible form, and yet Step 2 is a vital part of an effective defense strategy. Step 2 is a lot more doable if you start with Step 1. It's also much easier to *keep* your focus on God if you start talking to Him.

Step 3. Pray. Here's where you need a prayer that will help you practice the four essential soul attitudes. For those of you who are thinking, "*Seriously? Why does she keep going back to those soul attitudes?*", remember that I told you that they were *essential*. I also told you that the truth about demons is a well-kept secret.

Popular teaching about demons tells you to focus on props and rituals which are *utterly useless*. But an effective demon defense strategy will focus entirely on the issue of *soul attitude*—especially your soul attitudes towards *God*. As you lie there in the presence of *the thing*, you need to do everything you can to pull your focus off of your visitor and put it onto God. Demons need your cooperation to get the most mileage out of their stunts, and a huge way you cooperate with them is by *focusing on them*. Once you know what demons *want* or *need* you to do, you should intentionally do the opposite. Creepy thing would love for you to start talking to him, even if it's just to scream Jesus' Name at him. Creepy thing isn't the least bit intimidated by any of the sounds your vocal cords can make, not even the J-bomb. That *word* really isn't the demon neutralizer that people pretend it is. Jesus Himself is a different story, but JC doesn't take orders from a dot like you.

When you talk to God, think about how Christians talk to God, and then you'll know what *not* to do. Christians are super bossy. So don't be bossy. Bossy is irreverent. Christians are super repetitive.

Don't be repetitive. God isn't deaf. Christians gang up on God. Don't look for a gang. Gangs try to dominate.

A demon appearing in your bedroom indicates that God has set up an important growth opportunity for you. *The thing* is just playing the role of God's pawn by showing up oh so certain that he can freak you out. It was God who manipulated the demon into coming to you, even though the demon thinks that *he* is the one manipulating *you*. Now the question is: are you going to benefit from this experience by being a teachable student?

"God, help me to learn what You want to teach me in this moment," is a fabulous prayer to pray in these kinds of situations. I know some of you were hoping for a potent spell, but this isn't a game; this is real life. If you want to reap benefits and not just harm from demon encounters, you need to learn to *look for the lesson*. Always talk to God directly in these moments, *don't* talk to the demons, and try to keep your prayers in line with the four essential soul attitudes. For example:

"God, I know that You are the One in charge of this situation (REVERENCE), and that this demon can't do anything to me unless You allow him to (REVERENCE & DEPENDENCY). I know that You are only allowing him to be here in order to teach me something that will benefit me (TRUST). Please help me learn everything You want to teach me (SUBMISSION & DEPENDENCY)."

Once you understand that demons want to do everything possible to drive you away from the four essential soul attitudes, you can understand why this kind of response is so defeating to them. The fact that you're so focused on God in this moment is really stealing creepy thing's thunder. It would have been so much more fun for him if you would have given him your full attention, snatched up the Bible lying on your nightstand, and started commanding him to leave in the Name of Jesus while you shouted out verses that you'd ripped entirely out of their original contexts to make them sound like they were relevant to your situation.

A Game of Opposites

By now you should be having an “aha” moment about why I began this book the way that I did. A proper foundation of understanding has to be laid before you can see why the strategy I just described is so effective. If I were to just tell you “pray such and such,” you wouldn’t understand why, and you’d just be reciting the words like some kind of magic spell. But now you should be able to see that the *words* aren’t the important bit—it’s all about your *soul attitudes*.

Demons are specifically after your *soul*. They can’t physically grab your soul or whisk it off to Hell or take it captive (we’ll deal with all of that nonsense soon enough), but they *can* try to influence your soul into taking a hostile stance towards God. If you give God snark for too long, He’ll come back at you with some rather nasty forms of Divine revenge, which is where religions get their various notions of an afterlife experience that is extremely *non fun*. But remember: demons are going for a much bigger goal than just knocking out one human. They are going for mass casualties. They want to take as many humans down as they can so that God will be forced to conclude that His project was a flop. Again, this goal is utterly idiotic, but demons really are spiritual morons, so of course they’re going to think that they can actually succeed in upsetting God.

To effectively respond to demons, you need to figure out what they want from you and then do just the opposite. Ghosts want you to talk to them, follow them, and get emotionally involved with them. When demons show up in ghost form, you need to ignore them, not follow them, and remain emotionally indifferent towards them. In cases of demonic possession, demons want you to believe they can block your communication with God. So in cases of demonic possession, you want to constantly talk to God and focus on the fact that He hears everything you say. When demons are causing your brain to hallucinate, you need to focus on God. When demons are speaking to you in audible voices, claiming to be aliens who are scanning your brain waves, you need to focus on God. Demons will go to great lengths to get you to focus on *them* because their influence over your soul becomes *so much greater* when you do.

Whatever demons want, you need to do the opposite. They want to control your focus and your soul attitudes, so you need to make your focus unavailable by thinking about God. You also need to intentionally practice the *right* soul attitudes in the very moment that you are being attacked so that demons will see that their attempts to manipulate you are royally backfiring.

Demons have limited resources, which is something that you can use against them. Demons can't afford to leave useful soldiers parked with you all day when you're not responding the way they want. Demons want to *distance* you from God, not inspire you to cling to Him like a child clings to his mother's leg. When you keep giving demons a response that is the total opposite of what they want, they'll end up going away so that they can regroup. They'll also be back with a new attack strategy in mind. But the more rounds you go with them, the more practice you'll get in rehearsing the right soul attitudes, and the more developed your relationship with God will become. So you see, if you respond to demons correctly, they end up foiled and frustrated, while *you* end up miles ahead of where you were before they came around.

The victory you reap from tussling with demons comes in the form of personal spiritual growth, not juicy stories to tell, or more followers on your blog, or invitations to speak at a conference, or a bunch of fans begging you to cast one of your potent prayers for Divine favor over their lives. Online you'll find a lot of folks who clearly got into the demon game just so they could earn the reputation of being spiritual badasses and sell spiritual warfare paraphernalia. If you're hoping to get some fame and glory from your tussles with demons, you have already fallen for one of their favorite schemes and are likely to keep falling for a whole lot more unless you wake up and turn your focus back onto the four essential attitudes.

Those four soul attitudes help you in so many ways. They give you a great screening device for sifting out bad human teaching, they help you recognize and steer clear of many demon cons, and they keep you in a good place with your Creator. So forget about the ridiculous notion of "spiritual armor," and forget about trying to control demon behavior. Focusing on binding, loosing, exorcising, and

muting demons is just playing into their hands, because when you try to *control* demon behavior, you are *focusing on them*. Instead of thinking about what you want *them* to do, you need to stay focused on what God wants *you* to do, and He is always going to point you back to those four essential attitudes.

6. J.C.

Before I start explaining various demon tactics in more detail, we need to talk about Jesus Christ. Since I'm obviously not a raging fan of mainstream Christianity, why am I spending a chapter on Jesus? Well, Jesus and demons have become inseparable concepts, which is why you can't watch a demon horror movie without someone busting out a cross and talking about the blood of Christ. The most well-known demon zapping talismans are directly associated with Jesus: crosses, holy water, declarations of Jesus' Name, and of course, the Christian Bible. So who exactly is Jesus Christ?

Suppose you set up an elaborate fish tank and filled it with fish. Then suppose you have the power to morph into a fish yourself, appear in the tank, chat with some of the fish, then disappear again and resume standing outside of the tank in your natural form. This metaphor helps us understand what God did with Jesus.

Being the very talented Entity that He is, God has the ability to insert Himself into any of the projects He creates, and take on the form of any creature that He has created. In this world, God could show up as a tree, a bird, an ant, or a human. He can do this sort of thing whenever He wants, and He *has* done this sort of thing far more times than humans realize. Most of these "God sightings" are not recognized by humans for what they are. Most of the ones that are recognized tend to be private encounters that folks don't feel like advertising or jotting down in a book for future generations to read. In the case of Jesus Christ, God ensured that His "show up as a Jewish guy" moment *was* recorded for posterity. Not only did He ensure that it was recorded, but He has turned His Jesus character into a globally renowned Figure. Almost everyone has heard the Name Jesus. People are singing it, saying it, praying it and cursing it all over the world. What makes Jesus such a big deal? Because He was God walking around in human form.

It's very exciting to us when our Creator pops into our world as another human. It really gives us hope that we can form a

meaningful relationship with Him if He cares about us enough to do something like that. Jesus was fabulous. Jesus was God in the flesh. But Jesus was also just a *character* that God *role played*. For all we know, God has since shown up as a Chinese man, a Russian woman, a Scottish child, and who knows what else. God can pop into our world in any form He wants, stay as long as He wants, and do whatever He wants.

As exciting as God sightings are, we mustn't read too much into them. Many problems arise when you confuse *God* with a *character* that He invented for Himself. Take Jesus for example. Jesus was a man of Jewish ethnicity. God Himself has no gender or ethnicity. The only reason I refer to God as a "He" in this book is because, like many languages, English insists that living beings be assigned a gender specific pronoun. It sounds derogatory in English to refer to your mother as "it", so we talk about "her" instead. Referring to God as "It" creates all kinds of grammatical awkwardness, so we pick a gender. Since Jesus is the most well-known God sighting, and Jesus was a "He", referring to God as "He" feels like a natural. But God really isn't a *He*, *She*, or *It*. God is an entirely different sort of Entity—One that our minds are too limited to comprehend.

Now suppose your kid dresses up as Spiderman and runs around the house playing with his friends. When lunch time comes, you say to your spouse, "The sandwiches are ready. I'll go tell Spiderman to come and eat." You referred to your son by the name of the character he is playing, but everyone knows you are talking about your real son, not a fictional superhero. In the same way, when you call God *Jesus*, God and demons both know who you mean. The Name itself has no power. The Name is just a word. The real God doesn't consider His Name to be "Jesus"—that was just the Name of a character He played. Humans are the ones who need to assign labels to everything and everyone in order to keep track of what we're doing because we're so easily confused. God Himself doesn't need names, but He uses them for our benefit when He's talking to us.

In the world today, there are many people who are praying to the same God, yet they are calling Him by different names. Does it matter to God or demons if a human is using the name *Allah* instead

of *Jesus*? Not at all. Just as your son's name wasn't Spiderman, God's Name isn't Allah or Jesus or Krishna or Jehovah.

Now suppose your friend says to you, "Hey, I saw Sally the other day. What nice long hair she has!" You frown and say, "Sally has short hair. You must mean Mary."

In this example, your friend misidentified someone. She mistook a woman named Mary for a woman named Sally. Did Mary turn into Sally just by your friend swapping names? No. Mary was still Mary even when your friend mistook her for Sally. In the same way, if you mistake a *demon* for *Jesus*, and you refer to that demon as Jesus, that demon doesn't morph into the real God.

In the world today, people are using a variety of different names to talk to the real God. At the same time, *other* people are using those *same names* to talk to *demons*. What this means is that when you hear someone say, "Jesus told me such-and-such," you can't tell just from that statement if they got their message from the real God (who once role played a man named Jesus), or from a demon masquerading as God.

Demons masquerade as God all of the time, which is something that starts to make us squirm if we really think about it. After all, if demons are such ace manipulators, and if we humans are so gullible (which we are), then when a figure who looks a lot like the pictures of Jesus that you saw in Sunday School were to suddenly show up in your bedroom, how could you tell if it is a demon or God behind the costume?

Both God and demons use costumes when they appear to humans in visible forms. Demons use costumes to deceive us. God uses costumes to help us because our minds can't compute His true form (which isn't really a form at all, but let's not go down that mind mushing road).

So then is *Jesus* real? The *character* of Jesus was quite real, and that character was being played by the real God. So, yes, Jesus is real. But now suppose you are an actress who played Snow White in a community play. You did such a great job with the role that a lot of your fans refer to you as Snow White when you're out in public. Was the Snow White who they saw on stage real? Well, yes, in the sense that *you* are real, and *you* were the one standing on

stage dressed in a Snow White costume. In the same way, *God* is real and *God* was the One people were talking to when they talked to His *character* named *Jesus*. See how it works? There is God, and then there are the many characters God has played, one of which was Jesus. You can refer to God by one of His character names, or you can refer to Him by some other name that He gives you. The name *doesn't matter*. Who you're actually talking to is what matters.

Jesus & The Christian Bible

Demons know all about God's role playing activities and demons understand who Jesus was. Demons are afraid of God in any costume, including the Jesus costume, because demons know that God has the power to do unpleasant things to them. In the Gospel accounts in the Christian Bible, we find records of some of the things God did while He was playing the role of a human named Jesus. We also find humans putting out a lot of theories about who God is and how He operates. Should you just believe whatever those humans say because someone included their comments in a book that is now referred to as "holy"? Suppose I write up a bunch of theories about *you* and publish them in a magazine that I call "Sacred"? Would you want people to just believe anything I say about you, even if it's a bunch of guff? No, you'd want people to talk to you directly before they accept my *portrayal* of you as being correct. In the same way, you need to ask God directly before you just believe what folks in the Bible wrote about Him.

So what if you've never read the Bible? And what if when you try to read it, you think it's as boring as dirt? Do you have to read the Bible before you can learn about God? No, you really don't. Remember that God has that tricky trait called *omnipresence* which means that He is present wherever you go. This is one of the really handy things about God: He's always available to talk to, and you don't need any kind of device to communicate with Him. You don't have to be located anywhere special, either. God can hear you just as well in the bathroom as He can in a church.

When it comes to reading books about God, you should wait for Him to prompt you before you dig in. God might never inspire you to

read the Christian Bible, or He might cause it to seem very interesting to you. There are a lot of great lessons to be learned from the Bible, but God has to teach them to you. Christians do a lousy job teaching about their own holy book because they are so in love with the idea of ripping verses out of context and presenting them as standalone thoughts.

I taught in-depth Bible lessons for many years to help folks who wanted to benefit from reading the Bible, and one of my favorite things to do was to teach people the original context of verses that they were used to hearing as standalone thoughts. For example, there's a famous verse from the Old Testament book of Genesis that says, "May the Lord keep watch between you and me when we are away from each other." Christians put this verse on pretty greeting cards and they give it to friends who they are going to be separated from. Christians treat this verse like an expression of fond affection among friends, but in the original passage, it was actually spoken as a threat between two men who had a long history of manipulating and trashing each other. How do Christians turn some hateful threat into a loving sentiment between friends? By never bothering to consider original context.

For all of their quoting of Bible verses, Christians really don't know their Bibles very well at all. Even when they buy special Bible lesson books to guide them through passages in weekly Bible study meetings, those pre-printed guides are often filled with superficial guff. The Bible contains some fabulously disturbing material. It is designed to shake you up and really make you ponder God's complex Character and the common ways that humans respond to Him. If you read what the book actually says while asking God to help you learn something useful from it, you'll be amazed at what a firecracker it is. But if you just go to church and listen to pastors preaching sermons, you'll get a very wrong impression of what the Bible actually says.

On Christian websites you can find long lists of "Bible promises." A Bible "promise" is formed by someone yanking one comment out of a whole paragraph in the Bible just because they like the sound of that single thought. Sometimes you don't even get a whole sentence—sometimes part of the thought has been lopped

off. Christians have invented hundreds of “promises” for themselves using this “rip it, clip it” method. They then say that all of those promises can be “claimed” as rock solid guarantees from God to us. In stressful situations, Christians encourage each other to review the “promises” God has given them. They also quote promises at God in their prayers as a way of pressuring Him to hold up His end of a non-existent contract.

So what’s the truth about this promise business? Does the Bible actually contain *any* promises from God to *you*? Of course not, because when God is recorded as saying something in the Bible, He’s never talking to *you*, He’s talking to people who lived thousands of years ago.

Suppose I want to get to know more about who you are, so I hack into your phone and read through all of your texts and emails. I’ll probably learn some interesting things about you by reading through your communications with other people. But wouldn’t it be a bit ridiculous if I were to start yanking random texts completely out of context and saying that those texts were promises that *you* gave to *me*? You don’t even know me, and you certainly weren’t talking to me in any of your texts and emails.

Christians get away with some pretty ludicrous stunts, not the least of which is this Bible promise business. Should you be bummed to realize that the Christian Bible isn’t full of messages from God to you? Certainly not. You have God Himself right beside you at all times thanks to His strange ability to be everywhere at once. So what’s better: having God right there with you now, today, in this modern age, or having your only connection with Him being some religious tome in which God is talking about things that you can’t identify with?

The famous Psalm 23 contains a lovely metaphor of God as a Good Shepherd. The man who wrote Psalm 23 was a shepherd himself, so that metaphor had a lot of personal significance to him. But unless you are personally herding sheep today or good friends with someone who is, then you’re probably not going to get much out of the line “Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.”

One of the most inspiring lessons people are supposed to be learning from the Christian Bible is that when God talks to humans,

He talks to them within the context of their culture. This means that when God talked to Jews who lived thousands of years ago in a heavily agricultural society where everyone wore tunics and hand-to-hand combat was the main style of warfare, He talked a lot about things like swords, wheat, farm tools and Israel. When God talks to you today, you should expect Him to refer to cell phones, laptops, and the internet. God talks to you within the context of your culture. He understands all of the values and customs of your society, He understands the politics in your country, and He understands all of your slang words and cultural mottos.

God isn't going to talk much about tropical jungles when He's speaking to an American because we don't live near the equator. But God will probably come up with some very creative jungle analogies for those who do live in jungle environments. If you love computers, you'll probably find God using a lot of tech analogies when He's teaching you various concepts. If you love the ocean, He'll probably use a lot of examples involving the beach and sea animals and sailing. God is a very creative teacher who is a master at presenting complex ideas in ways that we humans can easily grasp. Because God interacts with us each on a personal level, you don't end up feeling like you're stuck in a classroom with a teacher who is talking over your head. The way that God interacts with *you* will be different than the way He interacts with someone else.

The more you learn to ask God to teach you as you go through life reading blogs, watching videos, and musing about the meaning of life, the more familiar you'll become with His teaching style. Along the way, the Bible might get tossed in as a teaching tool for a while, or it might never be something God uses with you. It doesn't matter what props God ends up using to teach you various lessons—what matters is that you are relying on *Him* to be your Teacher in life.

When it comes to dealing with demons, the important thing for you to understand is that the Christian Bible has no magical powers. Demons aren't the least bit intimidated by you waving or throwing a Bible at them. Sometimes they will *pretend* to be intimidated by props, and I'll explain why in the next chapter. But despite what you see in movies, *there are no magical props or words that you can use to ward off demons.*

PART II: DEMON CONS

7. The Powerful Prop Con

Demons have many clever cons and manipulation tactics that they like to use when interacting with humans. Being familiar with their most common games will help you develop better discernment skills and become less susceptible to bad spiritual advice. So let's start with a classic: the *powerful prop con*.

Before running any con on you, demons first size you up and assess how likely it is that you'll fall for it. The *powerful prop con* has proven to be very effective on a global scale. All demons want here is to get you to believe that some physical object can be used to manipulate the flow of supernatural power in your life. If you're an atheist, you'll be a good candidate for the old "lucky charm" routine. This is when you start feeling dependent on having a particular thing with you in order to ensure that events will unfold pleasantly. It could be the classic rabbit's foot, a particular key chain, a special pen, a certain tie—*anything* will work. In this con, demons try to ease you in to a sense of dependency on the object by first suggesting that its presence is the reason some good turn of events happened to you or some bad turn of events didn't affect you. Sound harmless? That's exactly what demons want you to think. Remember that their game is to prevent you from developing those four essential soul attitudes. Once you believe that you must be wearing that special gold pendant in order to have things go well for you, what's happening to the soul attitude of **dependency**? You're developing the belief that you depend on an *object* to keep you safe and shape your destiny in life, not on God.

What's so handy about the *powerful prop con* is that it can be easily tailored to fit any religious belief. Catholics are total suckers for St. Christopher medallions, Mary figurines, and guardian angel pins. Other Christians feel like they're better protected when they're wearing crosses or carrying Bibles. Pop over to the world of sorcery and there is an endless array of magical props to choose from. From ritual blades and altars to special gems, crystals, pentagrams and goat skulls, if you can be suckered into thinking some physical object

or fluid can be infused with magical powers, demons are more than happy to encourage you in that delusion. It is simply hilarious to them when we humans start waving random objects in the air with sober expressions on our faces, or kissing fancy pendants, or putting on fancy clothes. Anything that makes us feel like we can manipulate the flow of supernatural power is a plus for demons. If they can also get us to think we can manipulate actual *beings*—well, that’s even better.

When an exorcist holds up a cross and aims it at a possessed person, he is using the *object* as a means of *forcing God* to boot the demons out of the person. When Christians dab themselves and their homes with boiled water that they claim has been infused with special powers simply because they prayed over it, they are once again trying to *control the way that supernatural beings behave*.

Demons aren’t supposed to be able to approach someone who is holding up a Bible or a cross. Why not? Because those objects are supposed to *scare* the demons. And why exactly is a demon supposed to find a bit of painted wood and a pile of paper scary? Well, because somehow the power of God Himself is emanating from those sacred objects.

Christians refer to their Bible as the “Living Word of God,” and some are quite serious about the book being mysteriously alive. The logic here is that since Jesus is God, anything associated with Jesus has the potential to have His Divine power trapped inside of it. Since the Bible talks a lot about Jesus, the Bible is supposed to put out potent Jesus beams. The same is true for any kind of cross (because Jesus died on a cross), and any liquid which has had enough rituals done to it to magically transform it into the Blood of Christ.

The Blood of Christ is a big deal to Christians. Since Jesus Christ was God in the flesh, obviously anything that oozed out of His physical body or made contact with His physical body must have potent powers. Since there is mention of Jesus bleeding at the time that He was gasping His last on a Roman cross, and since His Blood was used as a major metaphor for spiritual salvation (I won’t get into that here, but in that cultural context, there was nothing new about

treating blood as magical), Christians today are quite obsessed about harnessing “the power of the Blood.”

Now since Jesus did His thing over 2,000 years ago, obviously we no longer have access to His *actual* blood, or to the cross that He was actually nailed to, or to the nails that were used or to the crown of thorns that was rammed on His head, or to the clothes that He wore. So how does anyone boil some water, chant some prayers, and then actually convince themselves that the liquid in that pot has morphed into the blood of Christ?

Demons are experts on human psychology and they are using our natural mind mechanics against us in powerful prop cons. We humans are very symbolic thinkers, meaning that we are constantly, automatically turning everyday things into symbols of ideas and concepts. For example, humans who frequently use cell phones become emotionally bonded to their phones and start seeing their phones as symbolic extensions of themselves. Americans view their cars as symbols of themselves, which is why bashing your enemy's *car* is a great way to communicate that you hate *him*. The same is true for our houses: American women often feel that their *character*, *priorities*, and *skills* are being assessed when visitors come over and observe the condition of their homes.

If it's easy for us to link our country to a *flag* or sexual preferences to a *rainbow* or our personal worth to the *circumference of our waist*, then we can be conned into linking anything: even water to Divine power.

There's a real racket going on among Christians over products associated with the land of Israel, because Israel is a major theme in the Christian Bible, and of course Jesus Himself was an ethnic Jew. These days, you can purchase all kinds of fragrant oils on the internet. But if you buy a fragrant oil from *Israel*, you're told it's from *the Holy Land*, and so...well, that makes it extra special. Or you can buy a prayer shawl with a big Star of David on it and because the country of Israel is associated with the Star of David and Jesus was an Israelite, then obviously if you pray to God with the scarf tossed over your shoulders, your prayers will be that much more potent.

Why the Con Works

Powerful prop cons work great for demons because they encourage our souls to focus their **reverence**, **dependency**, and **trust** on *objects* instead of on God Himself. They are also very handy for weakening **submission** because, let's face it, once you think you've God got trapped in an object, you're going to try to use that object to control His behavior. By the time we're trying to make God do what we want by waving crosses and spritzing holy water, we are practicing a soul attitude of **domination**. And when we tell ourselves that God can't act unless props are used to help Him focus His powers, then we no longer consider God to be our Superior. Instead, we act like we are the ones in charge as we constantly instruct Him on what to do when.

In some Christian communities, magic talismans are mass produced and handed out to church attendees, who are then instructed on how to use the talismans to make God do what they want. If you apply for a job online and you want God to give it to you, just make contact between the talisman and your laptop. If your child is sick, touch his body with the talisman and God will feel obligated to heal him. One self-proclaimed prophet who was ruling over a very large church had all of his people using bumper stickers that he supplied for their God talismans. The same fellow was cleverly passing out juice boxes filled with water that he claimed to be the actual Blood of Jesus Christ. Flicking droplets of the liquid at any target you wanted God to do something with was supposed to ensure that God would capitulate. Both the man and his toys were extremely popular, which just shows how people will eagerly latch onto *anything* if it gives them a way to manipulate God. It also shows how easy it is for religious leaders to make a mint by using very cheap props to rake in hefty donations. Stickers and water. *Cha-ching*.

Outside of Christianity, there are endless folks casting spells that are just fancy ways of bossing supernatural beings about. Often it's believed that if a magic prop is maneuvered in a certain way at the time of spellcasting, then supernatural beings will feel required to do whatever the humans want. But wait—it's one thing for demons to encourage humans to boss *God* about, but why would they encourage humans to boss *them*?

8. The Submissive Servant Con

You will never succeed at getting a demon to submit to you. Demons know what the real power structure is, which means they know you're incapable of harming them, therefore nothing you promise or threat impresses them in the slightest. But remember what the deeper game for demons is: to keep you in opposition to God. What better way to do that than to get you caught up in an obsession with some other superpower? Here is where the *submissive servant con* comes in.

This con is most popular outside of Christianity and among folks who are susceptible to believing that individual spirits can be pressured into serving humans. The more arrogant the target, the better this particular con will work, because it is based on the deception that humans are far more powerful than they really are. Ideal targets here will be humans that don't know the real God, yet they are feeling desperate for power due to traumatic circumstances in their own lives. People who have been left feeling gutted by abuse, loss, or social shunning are going to be easier to lure in with this con, because it plays on insecurities and promises endless rewards.

Power and personal significance are the two big draws of this con. The power comes in the form of you getting demons to carry out your orders. The significance comes from you feeling like you are all that and a bag of chips because you can get nonhuman entities to capitulate to you. The deeper you get sucked into this con, the larger your ego becomes until you're so full of yourself that there's just no reasoning with you. Folks who get sucked into this con end up worshiping *themselves*, since they view themselves as being at the top of the power structure.

Some cons work better when demons present themselves as an impersonal, nameless, mystical aura. Other times they want you to view them as a massive swarm of indistinguishable spirits. Sometimes they want you focused on a single super spirit personality, like the notorious Satan. But the submissive servant con

is one of the times when it's best for demons to make up a bunch of guff about how different spirits have different names, ranks, territories, and vulnerabilities. Nature spirits are a popular idea here, especially when we think we have to go *to the lake* to talk to the spirit of the lake, and that the *tree spirits* can't venture beyond the forest without losing their powers. The more detailed the lore, the more confident the humans feel about their ability to at least gain mastery over some of the lesser spirits.

Promoting the idea that there are both weak and strong spirits is an important aspect of this con because this gives humans a way of measuring when they are getting more spiritually buff. A popular rule is that the harder a feat seems to pull off from a human perspective, the more buff the spirit who does it must be. So if you want to move a chair, any wimpy junior spirit will do. But if you want to make fire appear out of thin air or paralyze a human, then you need a spirit with greater capabilities.

A closer look at the success rate of folks who claim to be able to boss God and demons about will reveal that there is a whole lot of denial going on. If Bible promises were really the potent things that Christians claim they are, then why doesn't God hop to it the moment a promise is thrown in His face? If prayer was as effective as Christians claim, then they'd never have the chance to gather their friends together to pepper God with the same request for weeks on end because the first time a prayer was prayed, boom, God would act. And yet in real life, this isn't how it works at all. In real life, we pray our heads off for healing and our friend still dies of cancer. In real life, we beg and plead for a promotion only to get passed over yet again. In real life, *no* and *wait* seem to be God's favorite answers, so how does anyone talk themselves into believing that they can get God to serve them?

Over in the demon camp, humans aren't having any better luck. In spite of all of the theatrics we go through to try to get demons off of their duffs, the kinds of responses we receive remain very disappointing. You *know* you have Spirit Spooky under your thumb because he levitated the ball yesterday when you commanded him to. He also made your annoying neighbor's speakers break so that he couldn't thump his bass beats through your walls anymore. But

when you order Spooky to make your boss terribly ill so that you can take his job, the man remains fit as a fiddle. Here is where you go home and crack open your book of incantations to see where you're going wrong. It doesn't even occur to you that Spooky is messing with you and doesn't find you the least bit intimidating. He only held the ball in the air to make you *think* your spell was potent. When he saw that your neighbor's speaker was one ba-boom away from kicking it, *Spooky* commanded *you* to cast a speaker busting spell just before your neighbor turned it on. As for your boss, well Spooky would have been glad to inflict the man with something but God blocked him.

In submissive servant cons, demons are the ones leading the humans, not the other way around. They have to for these cons to work, because humans don't really have any power. Because God is constantly interfering in demon affairs, demons are very limited in the kinds of stunts they can pull off in any given moment. When Spooky sees that he could toss a ball, but he'll be blocked if he tries to throw a chair, he urges you to command him to throw the ball. Because you don't know how to tell the difference between Spooky talking to you and your own thoughts bouncing around in your head, you assume the ball thing is your idea of a clever exercise to test your prowess as a budding sorcerer.

You want your cheating boyfriend to drop dead, but demons know that they don't have the power to take lives. To protect the illusion of your power, they come up with a phony excuse for why you can't give them that kind of command. Either you haven't mastered enough skills, or you don't know the right spell, or you haven't located a spirit who is powerful enough to pull off a death feat. Whatever the excuse is, it's a bunch of malarkey, but your ego would much rather treat the cover story as legitimate than entertain the possibility that your whole sorcery thing is a farce.

Spells & Sacrifices

God has woven many principles into this world. *The things that are worth the most cost the most* is one theme. *The more resources you invest in something, the more you'll care about it* is another.

Demons use these themes to their advantage in submissive servant cons. By coming up with rituals for us to perform as part of our efforts to control demon behavior, demons keep us emotionally invested in what we're doing. By teaching us that bigger feats require more complex rituals, demons reinforce the illusion that we are gaining more power over them.

Spells and sacrifices often play a key role in this con. You can't just toss out a command for Demon Baddie to do something. You have to *make* him comply by chanting a spell in Latin after you put on your special "I'm a wizard" frock. Or you have to kill some living creature, drain its blood, and make yourself a nice mess to have to clean up later by smearing the blood around in specific patterns.

Demons *want* you to believe that spells and sacrifices are effective ways to gain mastery over them. But remember, in these scenarios, *they* are the ones leading *you*, not the other way around. So while you imagine spirits looking on in nervous anticipation when you break out your spell book, in real life, the demons are the ones that said, "Hey, human, go get your little book and let's play." While you think *you* are the one who seizes upon the brilliant idea to turn a carrot into a potato, it's really a demon who says, "Turn to page 16 and let's play the vegetable game." The whole time demons find your gullibility both amusing and utterly pathetic. When you do exactly what they tell you to do only to then arrogantly boast of how *you* made *them* do such-and-such, demons are laughing at your idiocy and cooking up more ideas of dumb motions that they can make you go through just to pump up your ego.

You cannot make demons submit to you. When in doubt, always check the power structure to make sure you're still grounded in truth:

The Correct Power Structure

Depicting the Power to Harm

~ **GOD** ~
~ **DEMONS** ~
~ **HUMANS** ~

Since demons are above us on the structure, we have no hope of getting them to serve us. Only God has true mastery over demons, and since God is even farther above us, we're just going to have to give up on the notion that there is any supernatural entity that we can truly dominate.

9. The Sell Your Soul Con

While the *submissive servant con* works on getting you to start worshipping *yourself* as the ultimate superpower, the timeless “sell your soul to the devil” con is a clever set up to cause your reverence for *demons* to skyrocket while you practice giving God a bunch of snark.

The idea here is that you want something that you can’t get your hands on. Being the spiritual brat that you are, you throw a hissy fit at God for withholding from you. Endless sex, loads of money, and great fame are commonly sought after goals. When God refuses to meet your demands, you turn to someone who you imagine to be God’s equal: Satan.

Satan

So who is Satan, anyway? As far as you’re concerned, Satan is just another demon and doesn’t deserve any special treatment. While demons have worked out ways to keep themselves socially organized, trying to figure out who considers who to be a big shot in demon society is not only a complete waste of time, but it is only going to encourage you to give demons more reverence than they deserve.

To a poor man, a penny is exciting until it is put next to a dollar. As soon as the dollar is in view, that larger amount of money will be what holds the man’s attention. He’ll acknowledge the existence of the penny, but he’ll be impressed with the dollar. This is the wise way for you to approach the subject of demons: compare them to God in your mind and consider how much more impressive He is in every way. Then, while you acknowledge the reality of demons, you will not get carried away with revering them too much, and you will instead keep your focus on God.

Satan is one of those larger-than-life characters who has been built up to ridiculous degrees thanks to a bunch of fanciful lore invented by folks who had completely lost sight of the awesomeness

of God. While Christians are often considered to be promoters of Satan as the ultimate baddie, it's interesting to note that for two thirds of the Christian Bible (the Old Testament), Satan is barely mentioned. In other words, the fascination with Satan hasn't always been around. Like every other supernatural persona, Satan's popularity has changed over time.

The Christian Bible is a collection of documents that were penned by different Jewish men at different times throughout history. Many of the authors lived *thousands* of years apart from each other, which allowed a lot of time for Jewish culture to shift in values and priorities. After the last book of the Old Testament was penned, centuries passed before the first book of the New Testament was written. During that time, Jewish culture underwent some significant changes. One of the most notable differences between Old and New Testament authors is how they talk about demons. While Satan is only mentioned in 3 out of the 39 books in the Old Testament, with very little being said about his abilities, he is mentioned in 12 out of the 27 books of the New Testament. Besides an increase in mentions, Satan gets far more glorification in the New Testament.

It turns out that most of the biblical authors are very poor spiritual role models, so you should expect their material to be seriously flawed. Instead of modeling the four essential soul attitudes, the authors record historical accounts and their own views of God that are filled with themes of *domination*, *irreverence*, *autonomy*, and *distrust*. The New Testament authors were far more enamored with demons than they were with God Himself. The incredibly arrogant Apostle Paul portrays God as having a whole host of limitations which demons take advantage of, while Paul himself boasts of handing men over to Satan, as if he has the power to decide who demons can attack (1 Timothy 1:20). Paul also credits that bad ole devil with the power to block God's will from happening on earth, which is utterly ridiculous, but was a common belief in his day (1 Thessalonians 2:18).

Long after the biblical documents were penned, Christians continued to add new luster to the Satan character. They even invented an alternate name for him, *Lucifer*, which is supposed to be what his name was back when he was a good angel. (In Jewish

culture, acquiring new names as you went along in life was common practice, so the idea of Satan being re-christened after rebelling against God fit well with Jewish beliefs.)

In English versions of the Christian Bible that are still playing the Lucifer game today, you'll find the word *Lucifer* only being used one time. That single mention will be in a passage that is not referring to a demon at all, but to a human king. In an intentional effort to cause English readers to misapply the passage, translators left the Latin word *lucifer* untranslated and threw in a capital to make it seem like a personal name. In reality, the term was being used as a sarcastic dig. A certain human king had been publicly humiliated, and the author was glad, so he essentially says, "Hey there, superstar (aka, lucifer)! You thought you were such hot stuff, but now you're lying in the dirt and we're glad because we hate you! So, ha!"

Getting revenge and holding grudges were cherished ideals in ancient Israelite culture, so you'll find Jews spewing hate at just about everyone as you read through the Bible. As I said earlier, there are some great lessons to be learned from the Christian Bible—they're just not the lessons Christians teach you to expect.

So then, there really is no reference to Satan as *Lucifer* in the Bible. People only think there is because of shady games Bible translators and Christian teachers play. There is no end to the ways Christians trash other Christians by intentionally misapplying Bible passages and straight up lying about what the book even says.

If the whole Lucifer persona is a bunch of guff, then how much of what you hear about Satan is even real? Always go back to the power structure. Since God is infinitely more powerful than demons, any theory about Satan which seems to be elevating him as equal to or more powerful than God is obvious hooey. This includes the notion that Satan could give you something that God doesn't want you to have. If God *really* didn't want you to have something, then there is no creature in existence who can get you whatever it is.

How Choice Works

Suppose I have a deck of cards and I put three cards on the table in front of you. Then I tell you to pick one. This is how the

concept of “free will” works. Christians talk about humans having “free will”, but the term is misleading because it implies we have *endless* options to choose from. In our card game, I never let you get your mitts on the full deck. The most you get to do is choose between the few cards that I set down in front of you. When I decide which cards to set down, I make sure to only give you options that will also work for me.

God does give you choices in life. He gives you the choice to submit to Him or defy Him. He gives you the choice to try to con Satan into giving you something you want. But here’s what you need to remember about choice:

- *You only have an opportunity to choose when God gives you that opportunity. The rest of the time, He forces His will on you without giving you any say in the matter.*
- *God only ever lets you choose between options that will work for Him.*
- *Choices rarely work out the way you expect them to.*

The Ownership of Your Soul

You can’t sell your soul to the devil unless it’s something you possess. So do you really *own* your soul the way that you own a pair of shoes? It depends who you ask.

Most societies work on the principle that physical possession or having documents stating possession proves ownership. Since your leg is attached to you, it’s considered your property. But while you might live in a house, and in that sense appear to possess it, there might be a bank that has papers proving that they are the rightful owners of your home.

From God’s perspective, the true owner of something is the fellow who made it. Since God created all that exists, everything that exists is His property. Even when humans create something, they always start with materials that God made and use resources that He controls, therefore He owns the final product as well.

According to God’s definition of *ownership*, your soul is *His* property. And since it is His property, it’s not yours to give away.

Now humans sell stolen goods to each other all the time. But what happens when the police get involved? Often the stolen goods are taken away and returned to their rightful owners. In the “sell your soul” con, you don’t even get to *temporarily* transfer your soul into Satan’s hands. Instead, it turns out that your offer is a bunch of guff because you can’t actually give your soul to anyone. You simply don’t have an ability to do that. Not only do you not have the rights over your soul or any means of physically or mystically transferring it to someone else, demons don’t have the ability to take your soul the way that you imagine they can when you make these kinds of deals.

The Illusion of a Transaction

Now demons know how ridiculous you are being when you offer to sell your soul to them. Your soul isn’t like a pair of shoes that you can take off and hand over. What you think of as “you” is a being with multiple components: mind, body and soul. As long as you’re alive on the planet, these three elements can’t be separated from each other. You might think it is possible to thrust your soul out of your body if you’ve heard of *astral projection*, but it turns out that is yet another demon con.

It really works for demons to keep you confused about how your being actually functions. When they say you can sell your soul, that’s as ridiculous as saying that you can move your heart into your foot if you really concentrate on doing so. But because you’re so focused on getting whatever it is you’ve become obsessed with, you will buy any line demons feed you.

As was the case with the *submissive servant con*, in the *sell your soul con*, demons take the lead by first encouraging you to be angry at God, then telling you that you have another option. How you actually attempt to sell your soul will depend on what kind of baloney they feed you. If you look like an easy sell, they’ll just have you pray a prayer to Satan. If they think you need something fancier, they’ll come up with some hokey ritual for you to go through. Maybe they’ll tell you to sit in a circle of burning candles or break out some Latin. Things always feels more serious and final when we use Latin.

So when you sell your soul to the devil, when does he actually take possession? Here again, the answers will vary depending on what demons think you're most willing to believe. They might give your body a creepy zing if they want you to think your soul just got sucked out of your being. But the more popular line is that Satan will take possession when you die, which means you'll wake up in Hell.

Hell

So what's with the whole Hell thing? Well, first, there's God. Once God introduces Himself to you, He starts to give you opportunities to choose how your soul will respond to Him. Are you going to put effort into cultivating reverence or are you going to bask in snark? Are you going to choose to submit to God, or are you going to intentionally do the opposite of what He tells you to do?

All choices have consequences, including how you choose to respond to God. God says that He is a very generous Guy who will reward those who please Him with their soul choices. God also says that He can be quite scary and brutal and that you will be very sorry if you give Him too much snark. Throughout the ages, humans have tried to guess at just what kinds of rewards and consequences might be waiting for them on the other side of death. Different religions have come up with different theories, descriptions and place names for the nice versus nasty options. And while we've all been guessing, God has refused to satisfy our curiosity because He wants us to be surprised.

Now whenever God is silent on a subject, demons love to speak up and fill your head with a bunch of nonsense. The classic picture of a flame filled abyss staffed by pitchfork wielding demons was created by demons themselves. It really works for them when you think that Hell is their turf and that they control what happens in it. Since Hell is commonly depicted as a place for humans to be endlessly tortured, once you imagine that demons are running the place, what happens to your reverence? It gets entirely focused on demons. Suddenly *they* are the ones you are worried about instead of keeping your focus on God.

The theory that there is a mega demon named Satan who rules over Hell like some kind of monarch is another demon favorite. Anything that increases your awe of them is a winner, because the more you fear them, the less you'll fear God.

So is there really some place where demons are given free rein to torture humans at will? Of course not. Demons are never given free rein, and neither are we humans. We're all quite restrained by the God who made us, and it is God who you should be concerned about, not demons. God has an extremely complex and intense personality. He can be incredibly kind and gentle, but He can also be incredibly violent and scary. The worst thing that can happen to you as a human is to end up in eternity permanently parked on the dark side of God's personality. If that happens, demons won't be the ones keeping you in some tormented state, God will. So always the focus needs to remain on God if you're going to make wise choices in life.

Successes

So how do these "sell your soul" deals work out in real life? Well, since the whole idea is a farce, the best demons can do is try to keep up an *illusion* of it working for as long as possible. If you sold your soul for sex, maybe they can manage to lure some hot babe into your life. If you bargained for wealth, maybe demons will be able to have you win a lottery ticket and score \$50. The problem is that no matter what they manage to pull off, it won't be long before God shuts them down. Then there you'll be, feeling cheated, angry, and just a little freaked out.

A lot of folks who attempt to sell their souls actually believe the transactions go through. This then causes a lot of panic when the demons who were so sweet to them at first suddenly get hostile and mocking, promising to dish out all kinds of hideous torments as soon as the person dies. These sudden changes in attitude are one way that demons try to cover for their own impotence. They don't want you to figure out that they really can't do squat for you because God is always getting in their way. Instead, they want you to think you've fallen into a cunning trap and now your soul is the literal property of

Satan and there's no way for you to get it back. Of course this is utter nonsense, but as long as you believe it, your reverence will be focused on demons, not God. You'll also feel **dependent** on Satan instead of God, and you'll likely start trying to **submit** to the devil in hopes that you can get him to be merciful and give you your soul back.

Ah, the fun of tormenting gullible humans.

10. The Identifiable Spirit Con

Now that we've gotten into the subject of Satan, it's a useful time to talk about *the identifiable spirit con*. In this con, the focus is on getting humans to think they can learn to tell one spirit from another. Christians and non-Christians fall for this one, but it can have very different effects depending on who the target is. In some cases, it can greatly amplify your **reverence** for demons once you start viewing them as having specific personalities. Humans are very impressed with labels. If your friend says, "I saw a guy walking down the street the other day," you won't find his comment very interesting. But if he says, "I saw Joe walking down the street the other day," suddenly you're very interested because you know who Joe is. Joe has a defined personality, defined abilities, and a clear social rank. Joe is a detailed picture in your mind, where "a guy" seems like an undefined blur.

It can really pay off for demons to invent a bunch of fictitious characters for you to believe in. Perhaps they introduce you to Dark Face, a super powerful spirit who makes dark clouds appear in the sky whenever he's around. And then there is Crazy Horn, the malicious prankster who is always afoot when bad things start happening to you. In this con, the more detailed the backstories are, the better the effect. Soon you can't see storm clouds gathering without thinking about Dark Face and worrying about what he's up to. When your bathroom mirror suddenly falls off of the wall, or you slip on a bar of soap in the bathtub, you instantly fear that Crazy Horn is right there in the room with you. If demons can rustle up some human artists to sketch some creepy portraits of their fictitious characters, things get even more fun.

The first stage of this con is to get you to focus on demons. The second stage is to either increase your fear of them until you view them as being far more powerful than they are, or to increase your arrogance until you think that *you* are more powerful than they are. To accomplish the first option, demons just need to fill your head with a bunch of dramatic stories about individual spirit personalities.

None of the stories will be true, and the pictures you find of various spirits will be utterly ridiculous, but all of the theatrics combined will set you up to be very easy to terrorize.

Suppose you hear that a robber has hit homes on your street three times recently. He always strikes at midnight, he always comes in through a kitchen window, and he always has a gun. With these stories in your head, what's going to happen to your ability to sleep at night? Won't you lie in bed tensely, straining to hear sounds of a break in? And won't you keep looking at the clock and growing more nervous as midnight approaches? Demons get this same kind of effect by filling your head with stories about individual spirit personalities. If they want to freak you out, they make sure to tell you scary stories. If they want you to start worshiping them, they make up stories about beautiful angels who drift about just looking for some human who they can help. If they want to bloat your ego, they tell you stories of spirits who can be effectively driven off by certain prayers and rituals.

Some exorcists think their commands for demons to leave get more potent if they first get the demon to tell them what his name is so they can address him personally. Of course given what notorious liars demons are, how stupid is it for an exorcist to think the demon is telling him the truth?

Among folks who want to tell you all about Beelzebub, Jezebel, and other specific demon personalities, there is often some not so subtle boasting about recent times when Brother Anointed effectively drove Spirit Nasty off the premises by saying something or other in the Name of Jesus. And of course Sister Supreme can't wait to tell you about the time she spotted Demon Tightwad at work among her congregation and successfully expelled him, at which point the people stopped holding back donations to the sister's ministry organization.

Among Christians who fancy themselves to be powerful demon butt kickers, *any* Bible verse that can possibly be twisted into the backstory of a specific demon entity is used. This is the case with good old Jezebel.

Jezebel

The original Jezebel was a human queen with a bad attitude who ruled with her pain in the neck husband Ahab over part of Israel way back in the time of the Old Testament. Jezebel was one of those “If I don’t like you, I’ll just kill you” types, so naturally people were very afraid of her. She also took an attitude of “If I want your stuff, I’ll just help myself,” and this gave her subjects even more reasons not to like her. Jezebel finally died in a particularly gruesome way: being thrown off of a high balcony, splatting on the hard ground, and then having her corpse devoured by wild dogs while it was still warm. Her mode of death and her fierce devotion to demonic deities were the two things that she was remembered for.

Jump ahead in history thousands of years and we come to the much ballyhooed book of Revelation. In that book, God is chewing out various groups of folks for worshiping gods other than Him. In other words, for having rotten soul attitudes. One group gets chewed out for allowing some self-proclaimed prophetess to hang out with them even though she was actively trying to encourage folks to worship false gods. False gods or “idols” are just demons who are masquerading as gods. Instead of making up scary characters like Dark Face and Crazy Horn, demons also come up with superpowers like Zeus or Neptune who they then try to lure humans into worshiping instead of the real God. The shady human prophetess mentioned in Revelation was up to similar shenanigans, and God refers to her as “Jezebel.” He does this because He’s talking to a Jewish audience—folks who all knew about shady Queen Jezebel who just loved her false gods. It’s just a historical reference that’s intended to insult the shady prophetess in the same way that calling someone “Hitler” is considered an insult today.

So even though there is no mention of an actual demon named Jezebel in the Bible, Christians *pretend* that there is, and today you can find reams of material on how to identify and defeat “the spirit of Jezebel.” Christians are taught to be afraid of this sneaky spirit who is up to all kinds of shady schemes right in their midst. What exactly Jezebel is up to depends on who you ask. Some say Jezzy is gunning for God’s prophets (because in her day, the real Queen Jezebel ordered the execution of all human prophets who claimed to speak for the real God). Others blame Jezzy for trying to get

Christians interested in witchcraft (of course no one has a beef with using the Bible as their personal book of incantations).

While Jezebel is promoted as some super bad, super powerful entity, the term “the spirit of Jezebel” makes it sound like Christians are actually fearing the spirit of *the* Queen Jezebel. So is it a dead human everyone’s freaked about or is it an actual demon? As is so often the case with these stories, the lore surrounding Jezebel is more than a little murky.

Beelzebub

Another fine example of Christians falling hook, line and sinker for the *identifiable spirit con* is Beelzebub. Once again, we start with a historical figure, only in this case, Beelzebub wasn’t a human, but rather a fictitious deity who was considered the *patron god* of a certain city. In ancient times, it was a common custom to build a city, then tell yourself that a particular god had adopted the city as his personal turf, therefore he was the god you should pray to in times of trouble. This is similar to what Catholics do today when they invent a bunch of saints to protect them in particular situations or environments.

Beelzebub’s name was originally spelled Baal-Zebub in 2 Kings 1, which clarifies its meaning. *Baal* was a generic title meaning *lord* while the second name of *Zebub* indicated what the *lord’s* specialty was. It was common practice for people to pretend there was a go to god for all of the things that annoyed them in life, such as insect pests, so the popular theory that Baal-Zebub meant “lord of flies” makes sense.

By the time of the New Testament, Jews who are much too enamored with demons are using “Lord Zebub” as a nickname for the notorious Satan. Working within the context of the spiritual idiocy all around Him, Jesus also refers to Satan as Beelzebub (because He was talking to Jews who used that language), and once Jesus says something, the Christians go fruit.

Today there is no end to the lore surrounding the demon Beelzebub. He’s assigned all sorts of lofty powers and privileges. Online you can find Christians warning each other about the great

danger that could befall them if they try to take on the mighty Beelzebub without first acquiring the proper demon trouncing credentials. And yet amid all of the hype, no one is owning the fact that *there is no Beelzebub*. Both Beelzebub and the original Baal-Zebub are as fictional as Santa Claus. No matter how many songs, stories and portraits we make of the jolly fat man in a red suit, he is never going to become a real entity. The same is true for all of the tall tales demons invent for humans of individual spirit personalities.

An Enemy We Can See

We humans rely on our physical sense to tell us what is real and what isn't it. We are easily creeped out by the thought of supernatural beings who we can't see, hear or track. Putting names and faces on individual demons helps us feel more in control of a situation. And yet it just doesn't work this way with demons. Whenever we let them shape our beliefs for us, we end up in a mess.

Once demons have you freaked out about characters like Jezzy and Beelzebub, your imagination will keep you in a fine state of stress while they send their guys elsewhere. When you try to match wits with demons, you will *always* lose. Instead of falling for the lie that you have to become acquainted with individual spirits before you can possibly defend yourself, you need to stop focusing on demons altogether and instead turn your focus onto God and onto the development of those four essential soul attitudes. God will teach you what you need to know about demons, and what He doesn't tell you, you don't need to know.

It really is so much simpler to rely on God to instruct us in these affairs, but that doesn't leave much room for our egos to expand. It's far more enticing to our pride to tell ourselves that we can effectively battle invisible demons by slipping into some invisible armor and morphing into powerful *prayer warriors*.

11. The Prayer Warrior Con

Christian prayer warriors act like a bizarre blend of Luke Skywalker, Harry Potter, and a buff medieval knight. Like the knight, they talk about wielding swords and shields and toppling castle-like strongholds. Like Luke, they try to detect “disturbances in the force,” which they interpret as baddies gaining the upper hand on God and His angels. Like Harry, they rely on verbal spells, rituals, fellow sorcerers, and their own innate awesomeness to rescue God from the clutches of evil.

The very popular *prayer warrior con* tries to interfere with the development of the four soul attitudes by promising to give humans a great sense of significance. All humans need to feel like they matter—like they are more than just forgettable blips in human history. And while we’re busy feeling important, it would also be quite nice to feel *powerful*, and this con promises buckets of power.

It’s quite a heady feeling to imagine that God Himself is relying on *you* to choose a winning battle strategy. In prayer warrior culture, whenever there’s a problem identified, the warriors assess the situation and decide for God how it needs to be handled. It’s rather like the army dishwasher busting into the strategy tent, shoving the generals out of the way and saying, “Step aside, boys! I’ll tell you how we are going to win this war!”

The very arrogant title of *warrior* is used to distinguish the folks with the *potent prayers* from the folks with the weenie prayers. There’s a real sense of incrowd-outcrowd here, and within the warrior community there are unnamed but very clear ranks that define who the really impressive warriors are. Getting accepted into the warrior clique and subsequently climbing their social ranks is all a matter of schmoozing egos. You have to publicly submit to the warriors with the most social clout by posting fawning remarks about them online or singing their praises at church. Once you rack up enough points with the big boys, you might be allowed to “take the lead” on a new mission.

The missions never end for these warriors. They see demon armies marching in mass behind all manner of human strife and conflicts. Since Christians are erroneously taught that God plays ethnic favorites and that He feels ethnic Jews can do no wrong, Christian prayer warriors can be counted on to fly into action whenever the political nation of Israel is on the receiving end of bullying. It doesn't matter what a little creep Israel has been to others, and it doesn't matter if she's clearly provoked what's being done to her: to prayer warriors, Israel is always innocent.

Now in real life, no nation is always innocent, because nations are made up of humans, and all humans get petty. Like all nations, Israel has had her shining moments, and her moments when she's been a real jerk. The fact that Christians think that God considers things like *ethnicity* or *geographical location* to be a "get out of Divine judgment free" card just shows how little they understand about how God operates. But you won't come across any demon con which encourages its targets to critically think about the logic they are using to justify their behaviors. Instead, demons try to distract humans from thinking by whipping them up into an emotional frenzy or getting them focused on how nice it feels to be the heroes of the universe.

Helping God Run the World

Prayer warriors are so full of themselves that they really believe God needs their help to accomplish His will in this world. Prayer warriors have been duped into thinking demons are far more powerful than they actually are. You can't elevate demons without minimizing God, and for all of their reverent sounding talk, prayer warriors actually view God as shockingly inept. After all, what kind of God ends up flustered by the shenanigans of creatures that He sustains? It is God who defined what demons are capable of, so is He ever caught off guard by their schemes? Of course not, but when news headlines shout that Israel is losing ground in some tussle with another human nation, prayer warriors imagine legions of demons empowering that other nation. And without even bothering to consider that God may actually *want* the battle to be happening because He is using that one conflict to accomplish 5000 different

agendas at once, prayer warriors instantly assume the situation has gotten out of control. In this con, God is portrayed as some bumbling simpleton who keeps ending up distressed and outsmarted by demon armies that He can't seem to hold back. So God keeps calling for reinforcements, and that's when the Christian prayer warriors rush in.

Often it's the highest ranking warriors that sound the battle cry, and once they do, all warriors are supposed to jump on board and start praying for the specific goals that the alpha warrior outlines. These things run like military operations with the commanders bossing the troops about. The end result is a bunch of humans all yammering the same thing at God night and day.

So what makes a prayer warrior buff? Great faith. Faith in what? Obviously it's not faith that God is listening, because if you *really* believed God was listening to you, why would you keep saying the same thing to Him over and over? It's natural for humans to be a bit repetitive when they are excited or distressed, but prayer warriors take things to insulting degrees by setting up round the clock prayer vigils. In these vigils, warriors sign up for certain shifts. Once you sign up, everyone expects you to pray your head off for your entire shift. What you're supposed to pray about gets dictated to you by the warrior in charge. The goal is to wear demons down by perpetually hammering at their imagined strongholds with toxic prayers. Warriors really do believe that their verbal prayers have the power to do serious damage to supernatural beings. So while they imagine angels duking it out with demons on one side, warriors try to pelt the demons with prayers from another.

As is so often the case with demon cons, prayer warrior beliefs are quite contradictory. On the one hand, prayer warriors strut about talking like their innate righteousness, humble devotion to God, and never wavering faith is what makes their prayers so incredibly potent. But then they feel it's necessary to gather multiple warriors together or pray continuously for days on end before they can seize the victory. The typical pattern is for prayer warriors to pray fervently until they receive news that circumstances have changed. If they like the changes, they promptly take the glory for bringing those changes about. If they don't like the changes, they either solicit

more help from within their own ranks, or they declare that the enemy has won.

According to prayer warriors, God never wants bad things to happen to their friends, but they are quite open to the idea that God is responsible for the bad things that happen to people who they *don't* like. For example, if a prayer warrior were to read this book, he'd probably get quite angry at my portrayal of him as a total sucker for a demon con. Even though that's how demons see him, the warrior certainly doesn't want to see himself like that. It would be much more appealing to see *me* as the enemy, and then call on Jesus to zap me. If I should later get hit by a car or something, the warrior would be delighted, and interpret my crisis as evidence that God was punishing me for disrespecting His loyal soldiers.

Once you decide that you are perfect and that you are above being deceived, then it's very easy to go around finding "evidence" that your beliefs are true. Cons that aim at pumping up human egos are very effective in getting those humans to be unteachable and uncorrectable. The soul attitude of *dependency* teaches us that we have no wisdom of our own, but instead depend on God to instruct us. The soul attitude of *submission* helps us respond correctly when God says we are delusional about something.

Prayer Walls

Before you decide a ritual is necessary, think about the power structure. If God outranks demons, then is it really possible for demons to create a true crisis for God or effectively hamper His plans? No, it isn't possible. God is always in control of this world and everything that happens in it.

Since we are beneath demons on the power structure, is there anything we can do to prevent them from attacking us? No. Being outranked by them on the power structure leaves us with very limited options. There is no physical or non-physical weapon you can come up with that can effectively keep demons at bay, and yet prayer warriors will tell you that it's possible to erect invisible force fields that demons can't break through. These "prayer walls" are constructed by praying, typically while you also move about in the

area that you want to cordon off. Maybe you walk around the outside of your house or maybe you run your hands over the walls of a room. The idea here is that once you're done, incoming demons will get stopped by an impassable barrier and therefore be unable to bother you.

Now since prayer walls don't really exist, they can't work, and in real life warriors find themselves plagued with "invaders" even after their walls have been raised. Various excuses are invented to explain these problems without reducing the power of the warrior. It's always tempting to pass the buck and accuse someone on your wall erecting team of having insufficient faith or unconfessed sins. Unconfessed sins are big no-nos for Christians who believe that your personal righteousness meter is always bobbing up and down depending on what kinds of secrets you're sitting on. Christian healers are notorious for accusing their customers of having weak faith or unconfessed sins when no healing happens. Blaming the customer protects the healer's reputation and his perception of himself as being a channel of Divine power.

Demons *want* to feed the illusion that prayer warriors are effectively holding them at bay. Demons just don't have the pride problems we humans do when it comes to looking weak or defeated in front of an audience. Demons will *gladly* act like they are intimidated, injured, or conquered by a human in order to keep that human focused on the wrong soul attitudes. Demons are always playing long games with us: happily roleplaying weaklings in order to lure us deeper into their snares.

Demon Strongholds

Prayer warriors often promote the idea that demons have certain "strongholds" located around the globe. In Bible times, *strongholds* were cities that were encircled by a high stone wall. The purpose of the wall was to make the city hard to conquer. The nations being focused on in the Christian Old Testament were mostly very small, and they were constantly nipping at each other's borders, trying to rip off land to add to their own turfs. Bands of raiders would charge into villages with no protection and start chopping people

down with swords. Such attacks were so commonplace that people came up with the idea of *fortifying* their cities as a way of giving themselves a fighting chance. From the tops of stone walls, soldiers could spot incoming raiders and start picking them off with arrows. The doors of the city could be closed and locked, giving the advantage to those on top of the walls. While attackers tried to bust through the gates, defenders could throw down all kinds of nasty surprises to scare them off. Walls were a big deal in Bible times. Living in one of your nation's *strongholds* felt a lot safer than living out in the open.

Today prayer warriors promote the idea that our world is peppered with invisible demon strongholds. Like those fortified cities, demon strongholds are considered super hard to take down. Powerful ammo, manpower, and perseverance are what is needed in these cases. Some warriors even go so far as to draw maps of stronghold locations. Since these things can't be seen, warriors have to "sense" where they are. This group uses the term *spiritual discernment* as a synonym for *demon detecting abilities*. The more *discerning* you are, the more you can warn the rest of us when evil spirits are nearby.

While stronghold map makers will claim that God is the One cluing them in as to where demons are hanging out, it is really demons themselves that provide this information. The prayer warrior con is so effective in making humans worship themselves, exalt demons, and treat God like an imbecile that demons will do anything to fuel the illusion that there really is some ongoing battle raging between the powers of darkness and God's loyal legions.

Angels

Speaking of God's legions, this is a good time to deal with the tiresome topic of angels. Angels and demons are the same kind of creature, which means that when they tussle with each other, they are evenly matched. Now suppose you are a parent and you say, "I have a good child and a rebellious child." The term *child* tells us that you're talking about humans. The terms *good* and *rebellious* tell us what your kid's attitudes are like *towards you*. In the same way, the

terms *angel* and *demon* are meant to differentiate between creatures who have very different attitudes *towards God*. Angels are trying to submit to God while demons love to defy Him.

Back in Chapter 4, I explained that the reason demons are so nasty towards us is that they have a personal beef with God. For angels, the opposite is true. Angels are trying to stay on God's friendly side, and since trying to trash God's creatures doesn't sound like a smart way to accomplish that goal, angels are not aggressive towards us. But angels *do* find us to be a royal pain, and that is something that our egos could really use to grasp.

Like demons, angels are stuck having to deal with us. They respect us insofar as we are creatures God has made, but they are *not* impressed with us. Like demons, angels see us as the inferior, impotent things that we are. The notion that angels fawn over humans or that they are just tripping over themselves to protect and help us is absolute hooey. We humans are so self-absorbed that we always imagine ourselves to be endlessly fascinating to supernatural beings. In real life, angels only get involved with us when God tells them to, and in those situations, *His* opinion is the one they care about, not ours.

The theory that God has assigned us each a personal guardian angel is complete rubbish that was inspired by some rather egotistical comments made by certain biblical authors. I mentioned earlier that the biblical authors tend to be lousy spiritual role models. One of the areas they really fall down is in encouraging people to get far too enamored with angels and demons when they should be focusing on God. It isn't at all surprising that they do this when you consider that ancient Jewish culture was very religious and superstitious. The Jews in Old Testament times were very fascinated by the polytheistic cultures around them. *Polytheism* is the worship of multiple (poly) gods (theism). The problem is that the "gods" being worshiped weren't actually gods. Instead, there were scores of people being successfully duped by demons who were working a bunch of *identifiable spirit cons*. When you're always hanging out with folks who are clinging to a bunch of spiritual guff, you're naturally going to start embracing the guff as well because it will make your life a lot easier to just go with the flow.

Now just as you'd expect American authors who are writing historical accounts to focus on America in those accounts, the Jewish men who penned the biblical records focused on their homeland of Israel. If we would just acknowledge how natural this is, we could perhaps learn the right lessons from the Bible. But instead people try to say that since Israel is the main country being focused on in the Bible, that must mean God loves Israelites more than anyone else. This is a ridiculous conclusion to draw, but it gets worse. Not only do we all ignore the fact that the Bible is a culturally biased book, we also pretend that anything the Jews did must have been fabulous.

There isn't a single nation on this earth that only produces mature, classy, and exceptionally wise citizens. Far from being excellent role models of how to behave towards humans and God, the biblical writers were rather a mess. Add the fact that it was very popular in Israelite culture to let the whole neighborhood know when you were feeling strong emotions (good or bad), and we end up with a whole mess of psalms in which Jewish men are blasting God with their raw and real feelings on a whole host of issues. Sometimes they praise God, but a lot of times they gripe and throw adult tantrums. They also make up stuff that God never said just to make themselves feel better, and they make a lot of statements about supernatural beings that simply aren't correct. It's in one of the psalms that a comment about angels is made which is considered to day to be "proof" that we all have our own guardian angel.

In Psalm 91, a particular Jewish man is feeling a rush of euphoria over how well his life is going. All humans experience a wide range of emotions, but some cultures teach their people to hide their emotions, while others encourage their people to share with the world. There are advantages to both systems, and the Jews were passionate about sharing. So our psalmist waxes on about how fabulous God is—likely because God just saved his hide in a military skirmish. Jewish culture also valued exaggeration and everyone expected you to use ridiculously extreme language to make your point. So our excited psalmist lists out a bunch of complimentary metaphors for God, who he currently views as being a fabulous Defender and Protector of humans (it's amazing how much we love

God when He's giving us what we want). In typical Old Testament Jew style, the psalmist's language gets more and more exaggeratory as he writes out his poem until soon he's listing off all kinds of grand and wonderful things that *he* has decided God will do for anyone who pleases Him. Among those guarantees is a line about God making His angels guard humans at all times. In the very next line, the psalmist also promises that we'll be able to step on the heads of wild lions and dangerous snakes and trample both without getting harmed.

Now if you were to try to step on the head of a wild lion or a poisonous snake today, you'd quickly discover that the fellow who wrote Psalm 91 was being more than a little exaggeratory. God has really not made a promise to let us all step on lions if we are well-behaved. Instead, He's made it quite clear that agitating wild lions is a pretty foolish thing to do.

Shouldn't it give us pause to take an author's promises about God literally if the man is obviously making some ridiculous statements? Yes, it should, but as I've said before: Christians love to rip verses out of context. Today they rip out the one line about God commanding His angels to watch over us and say, "See? It's a rock solid promise from God. We each have our own guardian angel." No one ever says, "But wait—this is that same guy who said we could all step on lions without getting our feet bitten off. Maybe we shouldn't be taking his words so literally." Are you seeing the difference between just using the Bible to support what you want to believe and trying to apply it properly?

In real life, we don't have guardian angels. And if this is a disappointment to you, then here's a very important question to consider: *why don't you think that God is enough?* God is infinitely more powerful than angels and He is *always with you*. Like demons, angels can't do anything to you or for you without God's permission. This means that when it comes to thanking a supernatural being for helping you in life, *God* is the only One you should be talking to, not angels.

Demons love the whole guardian angel package because demons want to get your soul attitudes focused on anyone other than God. But while demons will encourage you to pray to your

angel, worship your angel, and credit your angel for everything good that happens to you, *angels* find this kind of behavior very annoying.

Angels want to please God, and they've spent thousands of years observing how God interacts with humans. They've noticed many clear patterns, one of which is that God always teaches humans to focus on *Him*. Sure, He might introduce Himself as different characters and go by different names. But God doesn't encourage us to worship created beings. Instead, He always turns our focus onto Himself. Because angels want to please God, they encourage humans to do what God wants. When humans react by gushing over angels, angels feel frustrated and repulsed. Angels do *not* want our worship. They are not our gods or our servants, and they don't want us to treat them as either.

The best way to respond to angels is to ignore them. It's useful to understand that they exist so that you can keep your focus on the right priorities in case you should ever run into one (it does happen). Knowing that real angels find your worship of them repulsive will help you spot an angel impersonator when that angel tries to get you to worship him or her. Demons often find it useful to show up as beautiful, sweet, complimentary angels who craftily coax adoring humans into worshiping them instead of God. In these cases, refusing to give the angel what he or she wants will often bring out the demon's nasty side, thus revealing the angel stunt for the con that it was.

Real angels are have no interest in forming personal relationships with humans. As for what angels are doing with God and demons—that is simply none of our business. Just as an ant doesn't care one wit about how you think his colony should operate, angels aren't interested in anything you have to say about what they should or shouldn't be doing. Angels take their orders from God, not us. Our prayers don't help them win battles because we are too impotent to assist them in anyway. That's how it is when you're at the bottom of the power structure: the creatures one rung up just don't find you very impressive.

Spiritual Warfare

The very popular idea that we ought to view life as one long, bloody battle was promoted by the apostle Paul. Paul's ego was so out of control that he would strut from church to church telling people that they should strive to imitate him, because he was such a fine example of what a follower of Christ ought to be like (1 Corinthians 11:1). When God was roleplaying the man Jesus, He really hammered the point that God takes a dim view of humans exalting themselves. But the apostle Paul couldn't be bothered with much of what Jesus said, and instead made up his own rules as he went along.

It's helpful to realize that before Paul got on board the Jesus train, he was already running with an elite crowd of religious leaders in Israel. His supposed conversion to Christianity was rather like a powerful politician in your country suddenly joining a scrappy band of nobodies who were trying to launch a new religion. The nobodies would naturally be so excited to have a big name join their ranks that they would gladly defer to him as their leader, even though he was the newbie. This is what happened with Paul and those 12 apostles you hear so much about. By the time Paul joined the Jesus movement, it was already being run by guys who had a lot more history with Jesus than Paul did. But because Paul was a bigshot in Jewish society and the Jesus movement leaders were Jewish nobodies, Paul was instantly vaulted to the top of the social structure. From there he went around acting like he was *God's gift to the world* while simultaneously insisting that he was humility personified.

Paul says a lot of really dumb stuff, but because he's the great apostle, Christians act like every word Paul said was Divinely inspired. Of course *Paul* claimed that all of his guff came straight from the lips of Christ, but you can't just *believe* a guy who claims to be passing on messages from God. You need to think for yourself. You also need to **go direct**.

Anytime some human says "God says" or "God told me" or "God wants you to such-and-such", your soul should be instantly asking God, "Is that true? Did You really say that?" Until **God Himself** confirms to you the truth of whatever was said, why on earth would you believe it? God created you, and it's a very simple matter for

Him to speak to you in a way that you understand. Don't let anyone tell you that you're not smart enough or holy enough or dialed in enough to hear from God. Much to the chagrin of so many folks who want to pull spiritual rank on you, you have just as much access to God as everyone else.

The apostle Paul spins off a couple of metaphors for how we ought to view life which Christians today treat as incredibly wise. One metaphor was that life was a race that we're all running and, by golly, we need to run hard and not quit until we reach that finish line. This is a lousy metaphor because a race instantly brings to mind the idea of *competing* with other humans. Worrying about what other humans are doing and constantly comparing your progress with theirs will only hamper your own spiritual development. Rather than view life as a competitive race, you should view it as God personally leading you through strange terrain towards a destination that He has chosen. Since you don't know the terrain, you have to trust God to keep you on course. And since it's you and Him together day in and day out, you should be focused on cultivating a positive relationship with Him. The key point is this: *Focusing on God alone will help you. Focusing on demons or comparing yourself to other humans will only get in your way.*

Paul's second useless metaphor for life is that we humans are caught in an ongoing battle against fearsome supernatural entities. To the superstitious Paul, there was no end to the kinds of dark and shady entities that could be after us. Like his fellow Jews, Paul viewed *demons* as running this world, while God did a lot of stressing from the sidelines. Paul shares a lot of his personal prayers in his letters, and we can quickly see that the man had a regular habit of telling God what to do. **Submission** is an essential soul attitude which causes you to view *God* as your Leader in life. **Domination** is when *you* try to be the leader. The apostle Paul models domination in his prayers, but that's hardly surprising given what an exalted view he had of himself.

In Ephesians 6, Paul tells Christians to put on "the armor of God." It's a metaphor in which the pieces of common soldier armor are each linked with a specific concept or attitude. We're suppose to strap on the "belt of truth" and put a "plate of righteousness" on our

chests. We are supposed to use a “shield of faith” to extinguish all of the fiery arrows that Satan is shooting at us.

Christians today have really run amuck with Paul’s metaphorical language, especially with regards to the “shield of faith” and the “sword of God’s Spirit” which Paul says is “the Word of God.” Christians today refer to their Bibles as “The Word of God”, and even though this is not at all what Paul meant (since there was no such thing as a Christian Bible in his day), Christians insist that it *is* what he meant and that therefore their physical Bibles are really magical swords that can be used to chop demons down.

In this same passage, Paul instructs people to “pray at all times.” He goes on to say that people ought to be constantly praying for other *saints*, or Christ followers. But wait—why do we need to be praying for other people? I have no idea what God is doing in your life and you don’t know what He’s up to in mine, so shouldn’t we each just focus on our own relationships with God and not act like nosey neighbors? Well, yes, we should, but you can’t expect Paul to give you good advice about prayer.

According to Paul’s metaphor, God offers us armor that we can strap on to help us out in our battles with supernatural baddies. Well, no, God certainly does *not* give us armor. God Himself is present with all of us at all times, and He considers that to be more than sufficient. God does not encourage us to view ourselves as being dependent on props, real or theoretical. Instead, He always encourages us to keep our focus on Him.

Demons love the spiritual armor business, and they are the ones inspiring Christians to hang up ginormous posters of some guy wearing the armor and looking ready to take on the devil. If you look up depictions of Christian warriors online, you’ll find dramatic images of rather haggard looking men decked out in medieval armor, going solo against some huge monstrous creature whose overall demeanor clearly says “I’m evil.” Such images are very glorifying to *humans* which is why demons love them. You see, God is never depicted in these battle scenes. He’s always conspicuously absent while tiny knight man holds up a shield with a cross painted on it. Demons love to promote the message that having God related *props* is good enough, and that you don’t really need God *Himself*.

Now demons are certainly after us and trying to con us every way that there is. But *acknowledging* a situation is different than *focusing* on it. Acknowledging that your partner's comments hurt your feelings is healthy because it keeps you in touch with your own feelings and prevents you from getting stuck in denial. But *focusing* on what your partner said and playing those hurtful words over and over like a song stuck on replay is only going to upset you and distract you from constructive activities. In the same way, it's important that we *acknowledge* that demons are powerful creatures who are very invested in the idea of trashing us. Acknowledging demons helps us recognize their shenanigans faster and not be so easy to dupe. But we don't want to *focus* on them.

The more you focus on demons, the greater their influence over you becomes. The same is true with God. This isn't to say that you are changing God's abilities by focusing on Him—it's more that you're positioning *yourself* to be more receptive to what He has to say. God doesn't need your help to accomplish His agenda, but He does give you very real options in your relationship with Him. Rather than turn you into an automaton whose every thought is preprogrammed, God wants your relationship with Him to be two-sided. He doesn't just act upon you. Instead, He does and says things, and then gives you options for how you will respond. Your options are always limited, but they are real, and over time they have a significant effect in how God chooses to relate to you.

As attractive as it is to view ourselves as buff warriors who can hold back powerful demons single-handedly, getting engrossed in such nonsense only drags us backwards in our spiritual development. Prayer warriors are so busy instructing God on how to run this world that they don't get around to taking instructions from Him. They are so convinced that God *needs* their help to foil Satan's plans that they lose sight of their dependency on Him.

It's impossible to really trust or respect a God who you are constantly correcting and instructing. For all of their exalting talk about God, prayer warriors clearly have a very low opinion of Him, and yet their own pious patter prevents them from recognizing this truth about themselves. Just as an alcoholic won't be receptive to getting help as long as he keeps declaring he doesn't have a

drinking problem, we humans can talk ourselves into denying what bad shape our soul attitudes are in. It's fabulous for demons. It's bad news for the warriors.

12. The Ghost Con

Demons are extremely cunning, patient, and manipulative beings, and they do some of their most impressive work when pulling off ghost cons. To grasp how deep their game is with these things, you need to look beyond the specter and see how much multitasking is going on.

Let's start with some basics. A ghost is a demon in costume. A ghost is never who or what it appears to be. The form is *always* a deception. Contrary to what many so-called "experts" will tell you, demons don't appear to humans in their true forms. Instead, they always appear to us in some kind of disguise, but those disguises are not chosen at random. Instead, they are very strategically crafted to create a specific kind of impact.

Manipulating Perception

It is disturbingly easy for demons to manipulate human senses. If four people are sitting on a couch, a demon can fix it so that only one of those four sees him, even if they are all looking at the same spot. A demon can also appear as a different image to each member of the group. One person might see a dog, another might see a girl, while another sees a troll and the fourth person sees nothing at all.

Demons are masters of deception and theatrics, and they don't have the spatial limitations that you do. Because they can manipulate matter in ways that you cannot, they are able to do all kinds of stunts which appear supernatural to you. Levitating things, causing objects to appear or disappear, manipulating temperatures—such things are very simple for demons. And since you are such a delicate creature who is easily creeped out by doors that slowly creak open and the sound of footsteps coming up the stairs, for demons, freaking you out is as easy as fishing in a bucket.

Consider how easy it is for you to con a human child by taking advantage of that child's lack of life experience and understanding of

how things work. Children are easily dazzled by the most basic parlor tricks, and they are prone to believe anything an adult tells them. Yet as easy as it is for you to deceive a human child, *you* are far easier for demons to mess with.

Demons are not forced to exist in forms that you can physically interact with, and this gives them a huge advantage over you. While a dog can't come into your room without being seen and heard by you, demons can make their presence totally undetectable to you. A demon could be right beside you as you read this chapter and you won't even know it unless he does something to make his presence known.

Imagine how many pranks you could pull on people if you could put on a magic cape that made you invisible to them. Then imagine how much greater your advantage would be if you could also put on shoes which made no noise when you walked. Humans rely on their physical senses to determine what is and isn't real. The more senses you can sneak around, the greater your advantage becomes. Demons can easily bypass *all* of your senses as well as all of those technological gadgets that ghost hunters use to try and detect the presence of spirits. From the perspective of demons, those gadgets only increase their advantage by giving them more toys to play with. Demons just love it when ghost hunters show up with their mics and cameras and sound recorders. The more gadgets we come up with to help us "sense" the presence of supernatural entities, the more fun demons have using our gadgets to scare us and lure us into their deceptions. Demons are not afraid of being tracked by us. They know we can't track them, but they love to watch us try, because they want us to focus on them. So they feed us just enough "data" to keep us committed to the hunt, and then they laugh at what idiots we are as we stand around trying to draw conclusions from the fact that a needle jumped around on a screen.

Trying to study demons scientifically is an utter waste of time, because modern science relies far too much on sensual data and gets flabbergasted by anything it can't measure. You can't measure demons unless they want you to measure them. And by the time demons start feeding you data, you can be sure it's just another con.

Understanding Death

With endless options available, demons put careful thought into what kind of costume they will don. Should they appear as a troll? A fairy? A unicorn? A weeping widow? A young child? A famous historical figure? Remember: ghosts are *never* who they appear to be. Just as a human can dress up as Adolf Hitler without actually becoming that infamous dictator, a demon can present himself as the spitting image of your dead grandmother without your grandmother being involved.

When someone you love dies and you're in deep grief, you can be a very tantalizing target for demons to use a ghost con on. After all, it *is* pretty convincing when a figure who looks, acts, and sounds exactly like your dead sister suddenly shows up in your bedroom. She's even wearing the same outfit that your sister was buried in. With so many similarities, how can you be sure it isn't really your sister, talking to you from "the other side"? Well, because there simply isn't a connection between this world and the place where your sister ended up.

When humans die, God separates their souls from their bodies. He transfers the souls to an entirely different dimension while the bodies are left here to decay. It is impossible for human souls to return to earth once God has transferred them on.

To understand how death works for human souls, imagine that you have two large aquariums in your house that are filled with various species of fish. Each aquarium has a plastic lid on the top of it which prevents the fish from being able to leave their tanks. Little Goldy the goldfish is stuck in the aquarium that you plopped her into and she's not going anywhere until you want her to. One day you decide that you want to move Goldy, so you reach in with your fish net and scoop her out. Goldy can panic and fight, but she can't escape the fate that you've chosen for her. You lift her out of the first tank and plop her into the second one. Goldy is now in a whole new world. She has no idea how she got there, and she has lost all contact with the other tank. She can no longer communicate with the fish she left behind, nor is she aware of their activities.

This analogy of fish tanks illustrates how humans experience dimensional travel. As a human, you are stuck living in whatever dimension God has plunked you down in. You can't leave this earth until He decides to scoop you out of it. When God does pluck your soul out of this world, you have no control over where He'll plunk you down next. All you can do is listen to Him when He says that how you respond to Him in this world will influence where He decides to place you when He whisks you out of here.

Now once God transfers you, you'll be stuck wherever He transfers you to with no way to leave. You will also lose all connection with the world you live in now. The theory that other humans are looking down on you from Heaven is 100% hooey. Because humans are unnerved by the whole concept of death, they cling to the comforting idea that they can stay in contact with someone who has died before them. And yet when we play games like this, we only end up making ourselves even easier for demons to deceive.

Demons are huge fans of the whole "Mommy is an angel who is now looking over my shoulder" package. Struggling to accept the death of your child? Demons have a great solution for you: don't accept it. Tell yourself that your kid is now an angel who flits back and forth between Heaven and here. Worship your angel baby. Create a shrine to him in your home. Talk to his photograph and wallow in a bunch of absurd fantasies about what a perfect person he morphed into. Make your living kids hate you by constantly comparing them to their perfect angel sibling who only exists in your mind.

Celebrate the birthdays of your dead loved ones. As the years go by, keep track of how old they would be if they had remained on this earth. Write them letters. Pray to them. Set out a place for them at your dining table. Dress up for them, and strive to live for them. Credit them for protecting and guiding you in life. Demons absolutely love it when humans obsess over the dead like this, because when we refuse to let go of what God has taken from us, we just end up developing rebellious soul attitudes. When we start crediting dead humans for the things God does for us, it's like we're

shoving Him out of the way and turning the spotlight onto a new, better god that we've invented for ourselves.

Primary Targets

Demons don't try their ghost theatrics on every human, because they know that this particular con won't work on all of us. A human fisherman first decides what kind of fish he wants to catch, and then he strategically baits his hook with something he knows that his target species of fish will find tasty. In the same way, when it comes to baiting *you*, demons first size you up, and there are certain kinds of information which they are especially interested in. Your current soul attitude towards God is a critical piece of information. How much do you care about pleasing your Creator? A little? A lot? Not at all? Demons can see your soul attitudes as clearly as you can see another human's face, and where you're currently at with God plays a huge role in how they will attack you.

Another key source of information are your personal fears and insecurities. Are there any unresolved traumas in your background? What are your most shameful secrets and worst memories? Who are you afraid of in this world? Who do you feel dependent on? Demons can access all of your memories, they can monitor your current thoughts, and they can hear everything you say to God. Demons understand you far better than you understand yourself. They know what you really want, what you care about, what you are emotionally attached to, and what you struggle with. First they gather their intel on you, and then they decide how they want to bait you. If they determine that you are a good candidate to be suckered by a ghost routine, they will be very strategic with the kind of character they create for you. If you are the **primary target** of a ghost routine, then the ghost will be tailored to look and behave in a way that *you* will find deeply intriguing.

Not long ago, Rose and Ben lost their teenage daughter in a gruesome car wreck. While Ben has been processing his grief in a healthy way, his wife Rose is stalled in denial. She won't accept the death of her daughter and she's been spending a lot of time

researching ways to communicate with the dead. When demons size this couple up, they see that Ben is not going to fall for a ghost con, but Rose is too good of a candidate to pass up. To get Rose's attention, demons start manufacturing the image of the couple's dead daughter walking through the house at random moments. In this game, Rose is the **primary target**: she is the one the demons are trying to hook, and of course Rose is immediately intrigued by what she sees. She believes what she wants to believe: that her daughter has returned from the grave to be with her.

Isolating Primary Targets

Now in cases where the **primary target** is surrounded by other humans who are unreceptive to ghost games, demons often fix it so that only the primary target can see their apparitions. This results in the primary target being shunned by the other humans in the group.

When no one but Betty can see a ghost in her kitchen, it's easy for everyone else to write Betty off as crazy. But is she? No, Betty is really seeing things. She's not just imagining it, but she is misunderstanding what's really going on because she's taking the ghost at face value instead of realizing that it's just a demon in costume.

What happens when Betty's people can't see what she sees? Betty gets very frustrated. She also ends up feeling isolated from her people, and this is exactly what demons want. The reason they're only appearing to Betty is because she is the only member of the group who seems receptive to their ghost con. The rest of Betty's people scoff at the idea of ghosts, and this is a problem for demons because those other people have emotional influence with Betty. Betty cares about what her husband, siblings, parents, kids and friends think of her. It upsets Betty when her people call her crazy and tell her to stop talking about her experiences with the supernatural. All of that peer pressure could cause Betty to start shunning the ghost, at which point she'll stop being so easy to deceive. In order to really trash Betty, demons need to isolate her from her support team as quickly as possible. They want to drive positive spiritual influences out of her life. So when Betty tries to

share about her latest ghost sighting, demons help Betty's husband feel threatened by what she's sharing. They start working with all of Betty's people to enhance feelings of exasperation, discomfort, and irritation. The goal is to get Betty's people so annoyed with her that they start socially shunning her. This isolation motivates Betty to put more energy into building a relationship with her ghost companion.

Demons will often increase their ghostly theatrics when their targets are in the process of shifting their loyalties in their direction. Betty's ghost is likely to be extra friendly and communicative during this period, and once Betty has become entrenched in obsession, demons will be able to scale back their theatrics and still keep her hooked. This kind of isolation tactic works great to separate primary targets from the influence of other humans who are not behaving the way demons want.

Secondary Targets & Hooks

Not every human group has only one good target. Sometimes demons size up a group and they see several potential targets. Whenever multiple members of a group have sensual encounters with the same ghost, observing how those humans react will reveal the role demons have assigned to them. In multiple target scenarios, there can be **primary targets**, **secondary targets**, and **hooks**. The person who feels immediately and strongly intrigued by the ghost is a **primary target**. Their strong emotional response is due to the fact that the demons have tailored the ghost character to specifically play on that individual's personal needs, fears, and beliefs. Primary targets will often recognize who the ghost is, or at least find the ghost's appearance very significant. Primary targets often feel a stronger connection to the ghost and a greater investment in understanding what the ghost wants.

Now while the primary target is immediately hooked on the ghost performance, you might observe other members of the group showing signs of cautious curiosity. While they will vocalize a disbelief in ghosts and scoff at the impossibility of it all, they'll also hop on the internet to try and find some biographical information

about the figure who is appearing to them. Let's use the Walton family as an example here.

When the Waltons move into a new home, young Stacy starts seeing two young twin girls appearing in her bedroom. The ghost girls appear to be close to Stacy's age, they are very friendly, and they invite Stacy to play with them. Young Stacy is at a point in her life where she's very lonely and these two twins remind her of a popular girl at school who Stacy admires. Stacy is immediately drawn to these ghost girls and she starts to play with them on a regular basis. Stacy's very receptive attitude towards these girls, plus the fact that the girls are offering to fill a need in Stacy's life, make it clear that Stacy is the **primary target** in this situation. There can be more than one primary target, but we won't know if that's the case here until we observe how other members of the group react.

When Stacy's parents learn about what's going on, they react very differently. Stacy's father says that his daughter is just imagining the whole thing. Stacy's mother is skeptical but curious, and she keeps asking Stacy more about her ghost friends. As Stacy spreads news of her ghostly companions to other humans, she's functioning as a **hook**.

In ghost cons, the hook is someone who helps demons attract more customers by giving them some free marketing. As long as Stacy is telling everyone about her ghosts, demons don't have to appear to anyone else because Stacy is doing the work for them. More importantly, Stacy is adding credibility to their theatrics by expressing her own belief in the ghosts. Humans are more prone to accept something supernatural if another human gives it credibility. Since little Stacy has a reputation of being a truthful girl, her accounts of the ghost twins are hard for Stacy's mother to discount, and as the mother's curiosity grows, it becomes clear that she is a **secondary target** in this scenario.

Secondary targets are humans who do not feel an immediate attraction to the ghost because the ghost is not specifically tailored to appeal to them. Secondary targets often have no prior experience with ghosts, nor have they thought much about them. The demonic agenda for secondary targets is to get those targets more receptive to the whole ghost package in general so that they can become

primary targets later on. For example, if demons can use young Stacy to get Mrs. Walton more open to the idea that ghosts are real, Mrs. Walton will be easier to con in the future. Mrs. Walton isn't ready to be a primary target yet. If demons tried to show her a ghost, she'd be much more likely to react with terror and disbelief than interest. Secondary targets often need to be eased into the ghost routine by being confronted with convincing testimonies from sources they trust. The more Mrs. Walton listens to Stacy's stories about her adventures with the ghost twins, the more Mrs. Walton begins to wonder who the twins actually are. Since Mr. Walton refuses to talk about it, Mrs. Walton calls up her sister Angie and brings her up to speed. Mrs. Walton is now functioning as a **hook** to Angie—she's luring another adult towards the same trap that demons have already coaxed young Stacy into.

When Aunt Angie hears what's going on, she suggests that she and her sister do some research to see if there is any history of twin girls being associated with the house. This is exactly what demons want—they love it when humans start looking up the backstories of the characters they invent. Demons are very clever and they know when they're dealing with the researching type. In these scenarios, demons intentionally appear as figures with accessible backstories: tragic histories which can be found without too much effort on the part of the humans.

When Angie and her sister do some digging, they learn that the house the Waltons live in was built to replace another, larger house that burned down under suspicious circumstances. The family who lived in the previous house was a very unhappy family. There were two twin girls in the family who were terribly abused by their father because he was jealous of how much his wife doted on the girls. One day the father locked the girls in a closet and lit the house on fire. The girls were burned alive, and their mother ended up going insane with grief. The father killed himself, and that was the end of that unfortunate family. Of course there's a handy photograph of the family on the internet and—what do you know?—the ghost girls Stacy is seeing are a perfect match to the girls in the photograph. Aunt Angie and Mrs. Walton are shocked when they find this out, and as we see the women conclude that the ghost twins must really

be those two abused girls who were burned alive years ago, we can see that these two **secondary targets** are being completely suckered by the demons' routine.

Now what no one knows is that Aunt Angie got pregnant out of wedlock back in her twenties and she miscarried a pair of twin girls. No one in the family knows this secret, but demons do, and they hope to use Angie's unprocessed grief to get her emotionally bonded to their ghost twins. The plan works. Angie begins feeling extremely attracted towards the ghost girls. It turns out that demons have had two **primary targets** in this group all along. At first, Angie's cautious response to the ghost stories made her appear to be a **secondary target**. But once we learn about how perfectly these ghost twins are ringing Angie's momma bells, we realize that demons have been targeting Angie from the beginning with a routine that they knew she wouldn't be able to resist. Angie is no longer a distant observer, she's all in, and she has decided to make it her mission to help the ghost twins find peace.

So far demons have made three big scores in this family unit. Stacy and her aunt are totally addicted. Mrs. Walton is coming along nicely as a secondary target who is growing ever more receptive to the idea that dead humans really do walk the earth. The only stick in the mud is Mr. Walton, but demons have effectively conned him into isolating himself from the rest of the family unit, which keeps him out of their way. Meanwhile, Stacy, her mom, and her aunt, are all functioning as **hooks** by telling other people about what's happening at the house. Even Mr. Walton is doing his part as a **hook** when he occasionally complains to his friends about how delusional his women are being. Scoffing hooks can be just as useful as sincere ones, because when Mr. Walton's friend Wes hears about what's happening, he is intrigued.

What Mr. Walton doesn't know is that his friend Wes has already been a **secondary target** in ghost routines in the past. When he was just a boy, Wes had a friend who swore that he saw ghosts. When he was a teen, Wes dated a girl who would have conversations with her ghost sister. These experiences have helped Wes become more receptive to the idea that ghosts really are who they appear to be, so when Wes hears that ghosts are regularly

showing up at the Walton home, Wes wants to learn more. He pays the Waltons a visit when Mr. Walton isn't around so that he can talk to one of the believers. All of the work demons have invested in Wes in the past is now paying off. He's doing exactly what they want all of their secondary targets to do by showing an increasing willingness to be manipulated by ghost theatrics. Demons now decide that Wes is finally ready for his own personal ghost sighting, so when Aunt Angie takes Wes to Stacy's playroom, Wes is shocked to see the two ghost twins with his own eyes. Aunt Angie feels surprised and affirmed when Wes sees the ghosts. She's also jealous, because she wants to see them for herself. Demons will get around to Angie eventually, but since she's already a believer, they aren't going to pamper her. Wes is the big score they want in this moment. They've held off on giving Wes a direct ghost encounter in the past because he seemed too resistant. But now that they've been working on him for decades, he instantly believes what he sees and they've got another fan locked in.

Are you seeing how this works? Demons begin by targeting a specific individual or individuals. They tailor their ghost image to appeal to the most gullible individuals in the group, then they use human hooks to spread the word about what they're doing so that more humans will be drawn into their trap. Really successful ventures often get turned into permanent "haunted" locations which attract visitors from miles around. Soon humans are working hard to protect the site from being destroyed, and demons are having a grand time wowing the masses with an occasional performance. Once a ghost personality becomes widely accepted, it takes very little to maintain a strong following. A very occasional sighting will be good enough if demons are careful to perform to audiences with good credibility. And since demons can easily control who does and doesn't see their images or hear their theatrics, it's easy for them to work around the scoffers.

Dealing with Ghosts

So how do you keep yourself from falling for this particular con? How can you avoid swallowing the bait, especially when demons can

cook up something that you are sure to find tantalizing? The first critical step is to remember that ghosts are *never* who they appear to be. They are just demons in disguise, and demons are malicious creatures who are always looking for ways to spiritually harm you.

The second key is to be *uncommunicative & uncooperative*. Demons really want you to engage with their apparitions, so don't. When ghosts talk to you, don't reply. Don't follow them or try to research their characters. Remember that these cons are designed to lure you in by playing on your natural curiosity, emotions, and personal issues. This means that engaging with the ghosts in any way—even by doing research when they're not around—is very likely to make you feel even more intrigued by them. Demons *need* your cooperation to make this con work, and they will often hit you with a lot of theatrics at the beginning so they can quickly secure your interest in what they are doing.

Not all ghosts are friendly. Some are terrifying and very aggressive. In cases of scary apparitions, demons are usually tailoring their costumes to play on unresolved fears that you have. Guilt over past sins you've committed or think you've committed, fears about God rejecting you, or unresolved psychological traumas provide fabulous material for demons to work with.

Joe already fears that God is blaming him for the death of his wife, so when Joe's wife starts haunting him and demanding revenge, it only confirms Joe's fear that God has eternally cursed him. To get out of this bind, Joe needs to apply good defense strategies. First Joe needs to identify who he's dealing with: it's not really his dead wife who is showing up in his bedroom—it's just a malicious demon who is trying to get Joe to focus on the wrong soul attitudes. Joe then needs to refuse to engage by ignoring his ghost wife as much as possible. The ghost keeps demanding that Joe kill himself as penance for killing her. Joe needs to do just the opposite of what the ghost is telling him to do. When she orders him to pick up a loaded gun, he needs to leave the gun in the drawer. When she tries to get him to come close to a cliff's edge, he needs to back away. When she's talking to him, he needs to reduce her influence by talking to God instead.

The main goal of the ghost con is to turn your focus off of God. The best way to get demons to give up on this strategy is to increase your communication with God whenever ghosts start coming around. Whether it's the sound of footsteps outside of your room, flickering lights, levitating furniture, drops of blood running down your walls or some visual image drifting about right in front of you, the best thing you can do is talk to God. Remember that He is in control of the situation, and that demons can't do anything to you without His permission. Ask God to help you grow closer to Him through the harassing situation and ask Him to make you all that He wants you to be. By focusing on goals like this, you are doing the exact opposite of what demons want you to do. If you're going to respond to their sensual theatrics by clinging tighter to God, then they are going to tone their theatrics down and start looking for other ways to drive you off course.

Demons aren't interested in wasting their time. They want to spend their limited resources on cons that will actually work. With so many strategies to choose from, they don't feel compelled to use ghosts. They prefer to save such theatrics for promising targets who show signs of spiritual gullibility. The more you listen to God in life, the less gullible you will be.

13. The Medium & Diviner Cons

In the previous chapter I used a metaphor of aquariums to explain what happens to humans when they die. Once you understand that it is quite impossible for the spirits of dead humans to contact you from the beyond, what does that tell you about séances & mediums? Clearly holding a séance for the purpose of contacting a human spirit is a complete waste of time. As for mediums, how smart is it for you to seek advice from someone who considers it a *good thing* that demons talk through her?

Since humans can't control demons, and since demons are constantly having their schemes interfered with by God, it's quite impossible to guarantee regular demon performances. For folks who are trying to build a career on their ability to get demons to perform on cue—such as healers, exorcists and mediums—a whole lot of fudging goes on. Exorcists and healers rely on shills to trick their audiences into thinking they are successfully controlling supernatural beings. You'd be surprised how many people in this world will volunteer to put on a dramatic act of being possessed for very minimal compensation. Exorcists and healers don't necessarily have to pay their shills in cash—sometimes the mere approval of Mr. Big Stuff can be enough to satisfy a human who is desperate for affirmation.

The bigger the crowd and the venue, the easier it is for exorcists and healers to install shills. Mediums have a tougher challenge with their small audiences, especially if they are working solo and not with an assistant who can help manufacture the knocks, bumps, and other “evidence” that spirits are responding. When attempts to contact a spirit flop, mediums have to use convincing patter to keep their customers coming back. An important key for mediums is to be selective about who they target. Really desperate people will hang on a lot longer, giving the medium many chances to “prove” her connections. Between sessions, research can be done that will aid in some spur of the moment “revelations” about who the dead

person was so that the customer will remain convinced that the medium is receiving legitimate communications.

An authentic display of theatrics from a real spirit is what mediums crave, and if demons like the audience, they just might oblige. Manipulating the medium's body and voice so that she starts convulsing, moving about with abnormal fluidity, or speaking in a voice that sounds beyond her natural pitch range are common stunts. Medium cons don't take much effort to maintain. One well timed stunt will keep humans excited for quite a while. Between authentic stunts, demons can help the medium pull off her usual pranks by first telling her what to do, then distracting the audience so they won't catch her in the act.

It doesn't take a budding medium long to figure out that she can't get spirits to work with her the way that she had hoped, so she starts to improvise because she can't stand the idea of not being "gifted." For demons, this works out great. The medium is functioning as their human assistant: going around intentionally lying to other humans and trying to get those humans to believe things that will ensure their souls reject the right soul attitudes. The medium is conning people for her own selfish gain, but her con is actually helping demons accomplish *their* agendas both with the medium and her customers.

Now and then demons see a human with some very good persuasive abilities toying with the idea of trying to be a medium. To secure the loyalty of these elite candidates, demons might appear to them as guiding spirits in order to encourage the humans to believe they really have "the gift." Of course once the humans become dependent on demons to keep up their acts, demons are in a fine position to punish humans who get out of line. Withholding theatrics is a great way to force a rebellious medium to capitulate. Sometimes mediums who try to shut down cons that demons were profiting from suddenly find themselves being terrorized by malicious spirits who won't leave them alone. Trying to use demons for your own gain and then discard them when you're done is a very dangerous game to play. Many mediums, sorcerers, and diviners have learned the hard way that demons don't take orders from us.

Prophets

One of our most frustrating limitations as human beings is our inability to see the future or into the minds of other humans. This blindness causes us no end of grief—or so we think. Because we don't appreciate how beneficial heartache, loss, and disillusionment can be in helping us to mature, we want to avoid these things as much as possible. We figure that if we could see into the future, we could avoid relationships that will end in pain, we could avoid unprofitable financial ventures, and best of all, we could gain a much greater sense of control over other people. If you knew for certain that the cute woman from the coffee shop was attracted to you, you would make your move with confidence. But since you can't read her mind, you hold back, afraid of being rejected, and perhaps miss out on a great relationship. If you could see into your father's mind and tell that he really did love you, it would help you feel so much less hurt by his mean behavior.

Information is a critical form of power in this world, and we just can't get our hands on enough of it. No matter how many well-trained helpers we have collecting and analyzing data for us, what we know is always far outweighed by what we don't know. Here is where demons steer humans across our paths who claim to have access to information that is inaccessible to the rest of us, such as the private thoughts of other people and what is going to happen in the future.

Divination is a fancy word for trying to get access to information through supernatural means. Many religious *prophets* claim that God is their source of special knowledge. Other *prophets*, *diviners*, *fortune tellers*, and *seers* claim to be hooked up with supernatural entities other than God. Some diviners use special props to help them “discern” what the spirits are saying, such as tarot cards and tea leaves.

It's very common for spirits to speak in strange metaphors and vague phrases that leave a lot of room to draw various interpretations. If a fortune teller *really* knows who you're going to marry, why doesn't she just say so? Why does she say vague things like “I see a tall, dark man...he's looking for love...he's a lonely

prince...” Why not just say, “Hey, your neighbor two doors down has a crush on you so why don’t you go knock on his door?”

To appreciate why demons dish out their insights using such vague language, you have to understand how divination works on their end. When humans start begging demons for glimpses into the future, demons love the fact that they are being focused on instead of God. They really want to give the human what they’re asking for. The problem is that demons don’t know the future, either. The best they can do is make educated guesses about what God is planning. Their guesses are much better than ours because they have so much more experience with watching God work with humans, plus they have a lot more information about what’s going on in the world right now. For example, demons can hear your boss’ thoughts as he debates over whether or not to give you that promotion. They can hear your girlfriend thinking about dumping you. They know that your mother just got diagnosed with cancer and she’s planning to not tell you. They can see the sex and health of the child in your womb. They know where the serial killer buried all of his bodies and who he is planning to kill next. They know that the stocks you invested in are about to crash, that your kid is thinking about killing himself, and that your dog just dug his way out of your backyard and is running towards the highway. Demons know all kinds of juicy information that they aren’t about to share with you because knowing more than you do gives them an advantage that they want to keep.

If demons told you that the shy guy at work really likes you, you might be nice to him and then the two of you might hit it off and launch some nauseatingly nice relationship. It’s much better for demons to tell you that the guy keeps staring at you because he’s a lusty pervert. Then you’ll be hostile and toss out some critical dig that demons will help you word to be especially wounding. Shy guy will retreat in humiliation, you’ll feel proud of your courage, and demons will have effectively stopped a positive romance from forming. Keeping you in the dark about what’s happening around you is critical to demons, but they certainly wouldn’t mind wowing you with a few carefully chosen facts.

To demons, human diviners play the role that **hooks** play in ghost cons. When they tell one of their pawns where the body of

some murdered child is, and she relays that information to police who are feeling frustrated and stumped, it's a win for everyone. The pawn feels like she has done a good deed, the police have forward momentum on their case again, and most importantly of all, a bunch of humans are now secretly pondering the possibility that supernatural entities really *can* be a reliable source of information. When the child's family hears that the tipoff came from a woman who has a "gift" for communicating with spirits, they are impressed and want to know more. By sharing one simple fact, demons end up getting the attention of many humans. And by intentionally stalling until the police and family were feeling truly desperate and despaired about ever getting closure, demons ensure that humans respond to them with more than idle curiosity.

Diviner cons are a lot harder to maintain than ghost cons. Ghost cons are great for demons because once they introduce the ghost character, they can maintain a sense of its presence just by kicking walls or playing with water faucets. The complexity of ghost cons gives demons a lot of backup plans for when God starts interfering and preventing them from showing off their specters in all of their semi-transparent glory. But in fact-based divination cons, humans quickly lose interest once the diviner's predictions start proving false. Here's where using vague symbolism helps demons to hide the limits of their own knowledge.

Telling where the bodies were buried is only going to attract a very limited audience. The real market is in *future predictions*. Unfortunately for demons, God is such a wild card that He's impossible to track. In any scenario, demons can imagine multiple ways that God might decide to spin things. If they're going to protect their own reputations, they need to come up with prophetic language that will cover multiple possibilities. Images are even better than words, because images can be interpreted so many different ways. Here's where demons start cranking out prophetic visions and dreams for their human pawns to run amuck with.

Every nation has other nations that it likes and nations that it refuses to like no matter what. America and China have been at loggerheads for a very long time, with both nations passing up many opportunities to play nice and share their toys. Whenever these two

powers get especially vocal about their dislike of each other, the world tenses up, and people start worrying about the possibility of another war kicking off. Tensions between large nations always send folks running to diviners for insights about what is going to happen. Because humans refuse to admit that they are incapable of handling future information well, they always think that they will feel better if they can know what's coming.

Now predicting world events is a royal pain for demons. Sure, sometimes it's obvious what's going to happen—but usually not until right before it happens. The earlier demons get pressured for predictions, the more sketchy those predictions will be. And yet if they don't feed their diviners any kind of bait, they risk losing their fans so they have to come up with something.

As tensions between America and China dominate the news headlines day after day, Prophet Told-Ya-So of "I Know Everything" ministries pops onto her blog and describes the incredible prophetic dream she received last night.

I saw white stars sliding across a blue night sky, leaving trails of red and white glitter in their wakes. Then I saw a giant gold star that was followed by four small stars. The giant gold star rushed in and attacked the white stars. The white stars fought back. The sky began changing colors from blue to red and back again. There was great fear and angst, but then, all of the stars suddenly dissolved in a frenzy of firework-type explosions and the night sky turned black.

So what does this indicate about the future? Not a darn thing, and yet the dramatic imagery is enticing enough to grab people's attention. Soon a whole host of other prophets are taking a stab at decoding the symbolism, and everyone's coming up with different theories which they keep tweaking to stay in line with news updates.

Let's consider how perfect this "vision" was. The white stars against a blue background that leave red and white stripes are clearly a symbol of America. The gold stars are a rip off from China's flag. The stars attacking each other makes everyone think of the current feud between these two nations. The way that the sky keeps flashing between the two background colors for the stars on

both flags (blue for America and red for China) also makes people think of the feuding. And then the sudden dissolving of all the stars—talk about your perfect ending.

If America were to do something stupid like attack China, then Prophet Told-Ya So can point to her vision and say she accurately predicted it because obviously the stars were going at it hammer and tongs. If China is foolish enough to launch some attack on the U.S., the vision will still sound like it predicted it. If both nations blast each other to kingdom come, well, obviously that was predicted by the stars exploding into fireworks and the dark sky which is a clear symbol of mass destruction. But if both nations get over themselves and stop fighting, then obviously the dark sky was a symbol of peace and the end of conflict. In this vision, demons used dramatic imagery to make it *seem* like they were saying something significant when all they were really doing was saying what everyone already knows: the two nations are nipping at each other.

Phony prophetic visions gain credibility by stating what is already known. They then toss in imagery that has been carefully chosen to be vague enough to allow for multiple likely scenarios. Demons know that all human feuds end eventually. Sometimes they end in violence, sometimes in peace. Demons have no idea how the current tussle with China and America will end, *but it doesn't matter*. To come across as brilliant, they just need to depict the conflict ending (because no feud lasts forever), and portray that ending in a way that can be interpreted as good *or* bad. A dark sky could be seen as ominous or peaceful, depending on what you want to believe. Fans of “I Know Everything” ministries really want Prophet Told-Ya So to be right, which means they will work hard to interpret her visions in ways that line up with news headlines. Of course, by the time the news reports that China and America have agreed on a truce, no one is wondering what will happen anymore, so why is Prophet Told-Ya So getting so much glory for saying nothing?

Prophets build their fan base by proving they were right. They can't prove that until the future they were predicting actually takes place. All of the glory is gained retrospectively for this group, which means they never really have to predict anything—they just have to

make people *think* they predicted something, and the best way to do that is to use wordless visions.

Horoscopes

Once you use words instead of pictures, you have a lot less room for error, especially if you're talking in complete sentences instead of those lovely vague phrases that prophets like to use. Daily horoscopes are a great example of how demons try to cover their ignorance when making plain speech predictions. The more specific they are, the more failed predictions they'll turn out. But if they are *never* specific, they won't gain any credibility. Balance is the key here. Demons pad horoscopes with plenty of generalities, then when they do get specific, they try to stick with things that can be confirmed.

You'll experience several different emotions today, but take heart. You will capture the heart of a stranger just by being yourself.

The emotional bit is the generality. Of course you're going to experience different emotions in a 24 hour period; every human does, so that little kernel is a guaranteed win for demons. As for the second specific prophecy: how can you ever prove that it *didn't* happen? You can't read people's minds, and demons will gladly help you brainstorm many possibilities for how their prediction could have come true. Maybe someone found your profile on some social media site and felt instantly twitterpated. Maybe that guy who glanced over at you from the corner of the coffee shop thought you were *the one*. While your imagination runs wild, demons are pleased at how well they've hooked you on horoscopes. They also know that your excitement over the next day's predictions will make you forget about today's, so they'll never have to come up with any evidence to support the prophecies that flop. Besides, they didn't say the stranger would *contact you*. They just said he'd be *interested* in you.

Encouraging Wrong Soul Attitudes

Whether they are helping mediums pull off parlor tricks, feeding prophets hokey visions, or helping horoscope writers keep their predictions vague and un-confirmable, demons have found that divination cons are well worth the effort they take to pull off. Humans want to get their hands on more knowledge so *badly* that they will forgive a lot of flops without withdrawing their allegiance from their favorite diviners. When it comes to really juicy topics like the end of the world and the second coming of Jesus Christ, there's just no limit to how many times demons can run people up and down the flagpole of anxious anticipation. And of course the infamous book of Revelation is a personal favorite of theirs, since its imagery is already deliciously vague and dramatic.

Since Christians are taught that it's blasphemous to ever say "Jesus lied" even when He obviously did, demons have endless fun tormenting Christians by ramping up their terror of an antichrist, plagues, and a one world government that demons know are never coming. Sometimes God is surprisingly helpful when it comes to providing demons with good con materials. But then again, since Christians *refuse* to teach the book of Revelation properly by acknowledging that the book is speaking to Jewish Jesus followers and addressing concerns that were specifically tied to the Roman Empire, why shouldn't God trash them using the very book that they've thrown Him over for?

When we focus on responding to God with the right soul attitudes, He teaches us wisdom and helps us mature. If instead we give our allegiance to books, humans, and spirits because we resent the fact that God won't be controlled by us, then God always ensures our rotten attitudes land us in a heap of trouble. False prophets abound in this world because God *wants them to*. He wants *you* to have the opportunity to choose between depending on Him for wisdom or depending on some gullible human who is only interested in abusing you for his own selfish gain.

14. The Tongues & Slaying Cons

So far we've been talking about cons that are trying to lure you away from God by getting you focused on manipulating spirits or basking in your own awesomeness. But suppose you are quite sincere in your pursuit of God, and you're really putting your heart into cultivating the right soul attitudes. Are demons going to toss up their hands in defeat and leave you alone? Certainly not. If they just leave you to blossom and thrive without any interference, there's no telling how many other people you might start to influence. Demons want to do anything they can to kill your motivation to keep pursuing God, so when you start annoying them with your eager devotion, they are going to look for ways to kill your enthusiasm. One popular strategy is to convince you that your interest in God is not being reciprocated.

Speaking in Tongues

To work this particular con on you, demons must first teach you to believe that God's acceptance of you is only real if you have an experience of involuntarily babbling nonsense. In certain branches of Christianity, speaking in tongues is considered proof that you are *in*. If you don't do it in front of witnesses, then obviously God is rejecting you.

As you might imagine, this belief can have a very devastating effect on souls who are sincerely seeking God. So much so that many end up faking tongues just to be accepted by other humans and to try and convince themselves that God wants them. While it's quite easy to fake tongues, knowing that you faked them can really undermine your confidence in God's interest in you. If demons can then convince you God is mad at you for faking, then you'll be all the more miserable.

So what is really going on with the tongues thing? Are people really speaking a "spiritual language"? No, they're not. While it is true that your soul speaks to God in its own soul language, that

language does not use words and sounds that can be uttered with human vocal cords. To claim that you're actually vocalizing the language of your soul is as absurd as saying you spoke a wink at someone. You can't speak a wink—winking is not a verbal activity. The most you can do is translate the *meaning* of a wink into a verbal language by saying something like “you bet” or “just kidding.” But while those words are explaining the sentiment the wink communicated, they are not really vocalizing the wink itself.

When you pray to God using words, you are translating your soul's nonverbal language into a verbal one. Because the language of your soul is so much more efficient than verbal languages, your spoken prayers never come close to capturing everything your soul said to God. They are just brief summaries that leave out a lot. God doesn't need you to use words to talk to Him, because He understands your soul just fine. But we humans are used to words, so we often translate our non-verbal thoughts into verbal ones for our own benefit.

Now in real life, God does sometimes surprise people by forcing them to speak messages that sound like utter nonsense to their own ears. When He does this, God will also have someone on the scene who can understand the message even though the speaker can't. While the speaking part is miraculous, the interpretation isn't, because it turns out that the speaker is simply talking in a real language that is foreign to him. If you only speak Russian and suddenly a bunch of Swahili pours out of your mouth, you'll be shocked and confused and you'll be speaking in tongues. If this happens while you're riding a public train, you'll be quite embarrassed as well. But if there is a Swahili speaker three rows away who hears you, then he will probably be quite surprised at whatever you said.

When God wants to be heard, He knows how to make that happen. This is why a legitimate prophet of God never has to go around saying, “Hey, everybody! Pay attention, because I'm about to quote God!” When God is speaking through you, people will know it instantly. Not everyone—just the individuals who God is speaking to in the moment using your lips. One of the most obvious indicators that you're dealing with a false prophet is when that person can't

stop using the p-word. The real deal packs its own punch; it doesn't need to be marketed.

Both God and demons have the ability to seize control of your bodily functions and make them do what they want. Both God and demons can make you babble a bunch of nonsense. In the case of demons, it usually *is* nonsense when they are making it happen, but they don't have to bother to force tongues most of the time because humans are so willing to fake them. As for God, He isn't interested in you babbling like an idiot. God is purposeful in what He does, and when He makes someone speak in tongues, it's for a productive purpose. Keeping you out of the loop of who He was having you speak to helps you stay humble. Without evidence that anyone in the room actually made sense out of your message, you'll stand there flush-faced and feeling like an idiot. Because messages from God often trigger a strong emotional response in the receiver, it's very likely that your receiver will feel too overwhelmed to want to publicly identify themselves. Miraculous moments of God speaking directly to you are like journal entries: they are personal and private and often not appropriate for broadcasting.

A real case of someone speaking in tongues is an impressive miracle that God performed for the sake of drawing souls closer to Him. The rest of the time it's a case of fakers and demons grabbing people. When demons are involved, there are often other signs of agitation, such as the kind of jerking you normally couldn't do without painfully wrenching your muscles. I'll get more into the ways demons can manipulate our bodies when we get to the chapter on possession. Right now the important point for you to understand is that speaking in tongues has nothing to do with God accepting you.

Demons despise humans yet they frequently do miraculous things through us. In the same way, God can perform miracles through someone He dislikes as easily as someone He likes. You simply cannot measure God's pleasure with you based on the kinds of dramatic feats He performs in your life: this is one of the lessons Christians are supposed to be learning from their Bibles. From entitled punks like Samson to irreverent twerps like the prophet Jonah, the Bible is filled with examples of God using spiritual brats to

further His own agenda in the world, while the brats themselves continue to regress.

Since other humans can't see into your soul and mind, they judge you based on your *behaviors*. But wait—why are other humans so invested in monitoring where you're personally at with God? Is that really any of their business? No, but we humans are such an insecure lot that we constantly compare ourselves with others in hope that we'll find evidence that we're on the right track. If God speaks tongues through *you* and not through *me*, then suddenly you feel rather superior. You might try to not dwell on how superior you feel, but we'd all like to be the favorite child.

In the beginning of this book I warned you that becoming spiritually wise required a willingness to accept some unpleasant truths. If we're honest, it's rather disconcerting to learn that we have no reliable way of monitoring what God is doing with other people. It also takes the thrill out of being a miracle worker if God doing something miraculous through us doesn't guarantee we're extra special. Are we interested in God for Who He is? Or are we just interested in how He can make us look good and cause other humans to envy us? One of the many ironic principles of spiritual growth is that the closer you get to God, the less you talk about being close to God. This is because an intimate bond with God is an extremely private, personal affair and it simply isn't something that you could or would attempt to share with someone else. God intentionally designed it to work this way, because He will only allow us close to Him when *He* is the one we truly prize. Once you have close communion with God Himself, you cease to care about the stunts He is or isn't doing through you.

Being Slain in the Spirit

This next con is supposed to discourage sincere God seekers for the same reason tongues does. The idea is that if God doesn't publicly "slay" you, then He is refusing to accept you. And just as the speaking in tongues con encourages spiritual rebels to get all smug about how *in* they are with God, we find some very bloated egos leading the theatrics in slaying sessions.

For most people, being slain by God's "spirit" (aka, the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost) means having Brother Pompous walk up to you with his loyal sidekicks. The sidekicks surround you, with at least one planted directly behind you. Brother Pompous then makes some dramatic declaration and shoves you backwards. It's not a really hard shove—just enough to give you what you need to *pretend* like you've been knocked backwards by some invisible power. You intentionally fall back into the arms of the waiting sidekick (who is hopefully staying on his morning exercises and thus able to catch you without wrenching his back). Everyone applauds, and you slink off feeling like a disillusioned hypocrite because you know that you really weren't zapped.

In this con, Brother Pompous is dispensing God the way a soda machine dispenses colas. Brother Pompous will claim that God has authorized him to do this important work of channeling God's Divine essence into people. And since it is *God* we're talking about, it would seem rather irreverent if you didn't show some sign of shock at His awesomeness invading your normalness. The assumption is that God can't physically enter a human without bowling them over because He's incapable of being subtle.

Now in some situations, there is no faking going on. People actually find themselves losing control over their bodies while some *thing* causes them to laugh maniacally, collapse into violent muscle spasms, vomit, bark like an animal, or some other unpleasant behavior which feels quite involuntary and impossible to stop until the *thing* backs off. Are such stunts really God's way of saying, "Hey, there, human, I like you"? No. These things are caused by demons who are saying, "Hey, there, sucker! You want to experience supernatural power? Try this!"

Getting attacked by demons in this manner can have several possible outcomes, all of which work for them. If you believe it was *God* who was doing violent things to you, you're going to feel terrified of Him and want to avoid doing anything to attract His attention in the future. If you think it was *demons*, you'll be terrified of them, and demons love it when your fear of them reaches terror levels. Either way, you're probably going to walk away from the experience traumatized and feeling defenseless about protecting yourself from a

repeat performance. This is assuming demons got nasty with you. But what if they gave you some euphoric rush instead?

The maniacal cackling routine is a favorite for demons because it can become as addictive as a street drug. We humans do love our adrenaline rushes, and laughing feels fun, even when we have no idea what we're laughing about. When demons use this lure, humans can end up obsessing over ways to experience another high. Soon they're doing everything they can to manipulate God into zapping them again, not realizing that He wasn't the One zapping them in the first place.

If you go through life in a perpetual giggle fit, what's going to happen to your personal maturity? A lot of sober thinking is required to move forward in life. Pursuing a steady diet of spiritual rushes is just an attempt to hide out from doing the hard work of maturity. People chase after spiritual highs for the same reason alcoholics drink: to distract themselves from issues that seem too difficult to cope with. The problem is that we can't find real solutions to our problems by refusing to admit that those problems exist.

Suppose a tree is always being watered by a gardener, so it never experiences thirst. It keeps its roots close to the surface of the ground and sees no reason to do the hard work of pushing them downward. Meanwhile, another tree finds it has no reliable source of water coming from the surface, so it spends enormous energy pushing down into the hard ground in search of water. When it finally hits a water table, it sighs in relief, and by then its roots are fixed deep into the ground. When a storm comes bringing gale force winds, the tree with shallow roots is easily knocked over because it has not bothered to anchor itself well. But the tree with deep roots is able to bend and sway with the wind without being wrenched out of its position. In the same way, a constant diet of spiritual rushes and emotional highs results in very shallow spiritual development. When you feel good, you believe God is with you, that He likes you, and that all is well. But once the rush ends, you fear that God has abandoned you, that He hates you, and that there is no hope anywhere. Demons understand that trust in God is strengthened by having to grapple with doubts and fears about who God is and how He views you. Since trust is one of the essential soul attitudes,

demons want to undermine your development of trust as much as possible. They love getting you hooked on sensual experiences that will stimulate your body and mind while killing your soul's motivation to work on maturity.

Christians are famous for holding evangelical conferences in which they use a variety of psychological tricks to manipulate their audience into a highly emotional state. When a bunch of folks come forward and surrender themselves to Jesus, Christians celebrate those new converts. They then find it baffling that so many of the folks who prayed the "sinner's prayer" with misty eyes lose all interest in God a short time afterwards.

If you can't sincerely mean a prayer that you pray when you are in a calm, sober state of mind, then you aren't going to mean it when you're jacked up on adrenaline or moved to tears by some touching testimony. If you have no desire to praise God when you're going through your daily routine, then you probably don't mean the praises you sing when you're swaying to the beat of the worship band's drums and feeling the stimulation that naturally comes from participating in a group activity. Just as you can't build a strong marriage on sex, you can't build a meaningful relationship with God on sensuality. Building a strong marriage requires sharing, listening, compromising, and a willingness to change behaviors that are harming your partner. Building a meaningful relationship with God requires sharing, listening, submission, reverence, dependency and trust. Getting you obsessed with all of the ways God could stimulate your senses is a trick demons use to get you to stop focusing on developing your relationship with Him. God becomes like a coffee pot that you only reach for when your current cup of energizing liquid runs dry. And just as humans don't want anything more from a coffee pot than another serving of caffeine, demons want to get you to a place where you don't want anything from God except a fresh round of sensual stimulation.

15. The Unappeasable Judge Con

If you don't seem like a good target for the tongues or slaying cons, demons have another, very effective trick up their sleeve. The beauty of this con is that they don't need any props or the assistance of human pawns. All they need is for you to fall for their *impersonation* of God's conviction, and that is something all humans are very susceptible to doing.

The goal of the *unappeasable Judge con* is to convince you that God is ticked at you about something and He's refusing to let you reconcile with Him. Anyone who sincerely seeks God gets suckered by this con many times, because it is just that good. Correct teaching on Divine judgment is very hard to come by, and by the time some religious group fills your head with wrong ideas about what God expects from you, you just aren't going to have enough discernment to tell when demons are imitating His Voice in your mind.

Demons are stellar God impersonators, and this con takes minimal effort on their part. Planting mental images of God with a hostile look on His face whenever you try to pray is a very effective way to make you feel rotten. Another winner is to keep whispering to you how bad it is that you did or didn't do whatever the key issue is. Usually the "crimes" committed here are quite petty, because this con is especially designed to take down souls who sincerely care about pleasing God. When you really want to please God, you *are* pleasing Him, but demons don't want you to know it's this simple. They want you to think that God judges you the same way humans do: by your *behaviors* instead of your *soul attitudes*.

Humans are very affected by repetition. The more times we are exposed to an idea, the more plausible it sounds to us. Demons use this to their advantage by constantly hammering you with the idea that God is ticked. As a result, your soul becomes increasingly distressed and desperate to do something to get God to drop His grudge against you. Here is where demons are just brimming with helpful suggestions for how you might soften God up. Obviously

He's not convinced that you really are sorry for whatever it is you think He's mad about. Bring on the repentant acts and constant confessions of the same sin.

The language you use when you talk to God greatly impacts your soul's beliefs. For example, your friend is cooing over her new baby and you ask, "Can I hold her?" "Sure," your friend replies, and she hands you the infant. As you rock the baby in your arms, are you then going to look at your friend and ask, "Can I hold your baby?" Of course not. Why would you ask for what you already have? Since it's clear that the baby is in your arms, you are not going to talk as if she isn't.

Now folks who really care about pleasing God desperately want to believe that He *is* pleased with them. But when He says that He is, they instantly reject this idea as being too good to be true. Then they continue begging God for something that He has already given them. In these cases humans are insisting that God communicate His acceptance of them in ways that *they* are comfortable with instead of letting *God* choose the method. God is a big fan of teaching us *principles* and then having us apply those principles in the midst of a struggle. It's rather like your math teacher instructing you on the principles of addition, and then telling you to apply what you've learned when you get stuck on a problem. The teacher refuses to come over to your desk and do the problem for you. And if she just finished her lesson, she's not going to say it all over again, either. Instead, she's going to urge you to apply yourself and use the problem solving tools that she's already given you.

Divine Judgment

How pleased God is with you *right now* depends on what your soul attitudes towards Him are *right now*. Maybe you were a spiritual brat yesterday. Maybe you committed a bunch of heinous sins last week. But what about *right now*? God knows the difference between you trying to butter Him up and you sincerely wanting to please Him. God is *extremely easy* to succeed with. Not only does He not hold grudges about the past, but He always judges your actions *in context*.

If you yank one sentence out of this book, you could easily use that isolated statement to make it sound like I was saying something that I wasn't. This is what you do when you look into your past and isolate that ugly moment when you lost your temper and told God to go to Hell. Today there is a lot of needless angst caused by people thinking God will damn them forever if they dare to "blaspheme" Him. In practice, "blaspheming God" is considered to be any kind of snarky talk. Some people think it only counts if you specifically mention one of God's nicknames like Jesus or the Holy Spirit. Other people think you're damned if you say something to God using words that your culture defines as being vulgar. What never gets discussed in these blaspheming freak outs is *context*. What was happening in your life at the time that you lost your cool and screamed obscenities at God? What exactly tripped your trigger? A closer look at these situations will often reveal a human who is feeling extremely frustrated by God acting very uncooperative, mysterious, or downright mean for quite some time prior to the human's meltdown.

We humans are a sensitive, fragile lot and we can only take so much before we lose it. God understands this about us because He made us this way. God also understands how we perceive Him, and that to us, our *impression* of Him often feels entirely right even when it is entirely wrong.

When God considers your mouthy little meltdown, He might see a human who really cares about pleasing Him reaching his end with God's exasperating behavior. God is indeed a very exasperating Being, and if there was a prize for being difficult to relate to, God would certainly win it. So God does blame *you* for the fact that *He* is so hard for humans to relate to? Of course not. God judges you by your soul attitudes.

When a mother screams at her child for almost stepping out in front of traffic, the intensity of her anger reflects how bonded she feels to her child. She screams at him because she doesn't want to lose him. In the same way, we humans do a lot of screaming and cursing at God because we don't want to lose Him. God never mistakes frustrated love for haughty rebellion, even though the two can look the same on the outside. To learn more about the

differences between how God and humans judge you, see the charts at the back of this book.

The Language of Prayer

Adjusting your prayer language is a good way to defend against the *unappeasable Judge con*. When you sincerely care about pleasing God, you'll be swift to respond to His conviction. If God says He doesn't like something you did, then you need to practice submission by agreeing with His assessment and moving on. Don't start apologizing fifty more times for doing whatever it was. Once the subject has been addressed, drop it, and don't let demons con you into picking it up again.

Demons work hard to get you to keep confessing your sins or pleading with God to forgive you because they know that the more you *talk* and *act* as if God is still mad at you, the more you'll *believe* that He actually is. Humans don't ask for what they already have, and God isn't deaf, so ask *once*, then drop it.

Since the goal of this book is to teach you about demon behavior and not get in-depth about how to relate to God, I'm not going to delve into a long discussion of confession and repentance. The key principle you need to understand is that the language of your prayers affects you, and that repetitive prayers reinforce doubts about you being in a good place with God. Because repetitive prayers are so good at eroding the soul attitude of *trust*, demons work hard to get you in the habit of praying the same things ad nauseum without ever stopping to consider that God has already heard and answered you.

The *unappeasable Judge con* tries to convince you that there are problems between you and God. Remember that demons *want* there to be friction between you and God, so if He really is angry with you, demons are certainly not going to warn you about it. Instead, they will try to assure you that all is well. This con targets souls who are currently in a good place with God and souls who are trying to seek God for the first time. Because of the way demons work this con, you'll find yourself wanting to apologize or grovel to God over and over again. You'll feel this way because demons use a very

harping style when working this con. They keep telling you over and over that God is mad at you. Each time they say something, your soul responds in distress and you feel a desire to apologize or grovel. When you notice that repetitive pattern forming, stop and consider the possibility that you're being conned.

When God actually has a beef with you, He tells you about in a very clear way. He also gives you clear instructions on what to do about it. Usually all He wants is for you to submit to Him by agreeing with His assessment of the situation. Once you do what God wants, He drops the subject. God does *not* keep harping on an issue after you have given Him the response He wanted. This means you're never going to find yourself in a position where God keeps demanding that you acknowledge how right He was about something. God is very much a "say it once, let it drop" kind of Judge. He only harps when you are digging your little heels in and refusing to submit to Him. By the time you're groveling and sobbing and pleading for God to forgive you, you obviously don't have a problem with submission, you're just being conned.

16. The Healer & Exorcist Cons

In healer and exorcist cons, demons want you to believe that God needs the aid of human beings to perform certain kinds of miracles. Often the humans involved in these cons want you to believe this as well.

Now suppose you place a puppy in a room, and then you sit down and count your money. Is the puppy somehow giving you the power to add up your pocket change? Of course not. You have the ability to count money with or without some little dog. In fact, the puppy really has nothing to do with what you're doing. You're counting your money because you're in the mood to do so. The fact that you brought the puppy in to watch you count it might make him feel happy, but he certainly isn't helping you do your task.

When you see healers and exorcists at work, the first thing to know is that most of them are fakers who are putting on carefully rehearsed shows. The bigger the audience, the greater the drama, and the more confident the healer and exorcist act, the more likely it is the whole thing is rigged. If it is a pre-scheduled performance, which most of these things are, then it is extremely likely that the whole thing is fake. The world is full of folks who have discovered that it's extremely easy to make a buck by wowing people with a theatrical show, so that's what most healers and exorcists are doing.

Real miraculous healings and exorcisms *do* occur, but they're not usually caught on film because the people being affected are more concerned with what's happening than they are with getting liked on YouTube. In many cases of *real* healings and exorcisms, there is *not* a human on the scene who is acting like a channel of God's power. You see, God doesn't need humans to help Him perform miracles anymore than you needed your dog's help to count your money. But there are times when God will park a human on the scene of His miraculous act just as you planted your puppy on the floor. God might even give the human some instructions on how to behave. When He does this, He is doing it for the benefit of the humans involved.

We often have an easier time tracking with God when He works with us using humans. Many people are more receptive to God's Voice when He speaks to them using a human's audible voice instead of talking directly to their souls. But the key point to understand is that God never promotes the idea that He is *dependent* on humans to accomplish His agenda. It is only demons and fatheaded humans who promote such nonsense.

You might have heard Christians say that Jesus can't start His much anticipated Second Coming until Christians have evangelized the entire world. In other words, God's agenda is being stalled by human inaction. Once you believe that God needs you to accomplish His will in this world, what's going to happen to your sense of dependency on Him? It will rapidly diminish while you entertain the ego pleasing notion that *God* is quite dependent on *you*. What does it say about God's power if He needs a dot like you to help Him accomplish things? Suddenly God starts sounding rather impotent, and as your perception of His power shrinks, so does your reverence for Him. Soon you really don't see why you should always be the one doing the submitting in your relationship with God. Since He is obviously dependent on you, shouldn't *He* be bowing to *you* at times?

It is very difficult for humans to keep a grip on the right soul attitudes once God starts performing miracles through them. If you're going to have any chance of surviving this sort of thing, you will need God to give you special equipping first, and there is *nothing fun* about that kind of training. It's pretty much one long excruciating round of having your pride ground into the dirt until you actually feel *repulsed* by the idea of other humans admiring you. Real humility isn't something you can fake, but once God pounds it into you, you find the sound of humans applauding you as enjoyable as the sound of fingernails scraping a chalkboard.

Given how miserable God's training program is, it's no surprise that most humans refuse to go through it, which is why so many legitimate healers, exorcists, prophets and preachers don't last long before they fall into the trap of self-exaltation.

Taking Credit

In real life, God performs legitimate healings and exorcisms using the spiritually rebellious as well as the obedient. This is why *you cannot assess God's pleasure with someone based on how He uses them*. Naturally people who God does some miracle through often try to use that miracle as evidence that God thinks they are amazing. Yet the very fact that someone is trying to use an act of God to promote himself tells you a lot about his current soul attitudes. When we embrace the four essential soul attitudes, we realize how wrong it is to try to use God as a tool for promoting ourselves. God alone deserves the glory for the things He accomplishes.

Because it's pretty much guaranteed that people will start fawning over you if they find out that God used you as a prop in one of His miracles, folks with the right spiritual priorities are *not* going to go around boasting about what God did through them. Bragging about such things only attracts the kind of attention that is very off-putting to someone with true humility, because humility is a soul attitude which says, "Since I am not capable of doing anything without God's help, I don't deserve the glory for anything He does through me."

Since real humility just doesn't sound very enticing to humans, most of us aren't willing to cooperate with God's methods of cultivating humility within us. Many healers and exorcists find it much more fun to claim that God has chosen them as worthy channels for His Divine power to flow through. With the help of shills and some basic stage magician tricks, healers and exorcists quickly produce "evidence" that God will only produce a miracle when they are on the scene. People who are desperate for a miracle aren't going to risk contradicting "God's chosen one," and soon humans are feeling far more dependent on the human channel than they are on God Himself.

Intercessors

When you want to communicate with God, remember these two rules: ***Be Honest & Go Direct***. Religions today are promoting all kinds of teachings and rituals which suggest that you *can't* talk

directly to God, but that you can only talk to Him through some kind of intercessor or messenger who will supposedly relay your message to God with the appropriate degree of urgency. Catholicism heavily promotes the Virgin Mary as a critical intercessor. Saints and angels also receive copious amounts of prayers that should have been directed to God Himself. The famous Catholic rosary is a decorative string of beads which is used to count one's way through a specific set of prayers, and many of those prayers are addressed at someone other than God. Are you being honest when you rattle off prayers that someone else wrote? Are you practicing the soul attitude of *trust* when you pray the same prayers over and over right in a row as if God either can't hear you or isn't listening? And are you going direct when you're praying to Mary, an angel, or a dead human instead of to God Himself?

The woman who is referred to as the Virgin Mary was a historical figure who found herself in the very awkward position of giving birth to Jesus Christ. Mary was just a human, and when she died, she was cut off from contact with this world or anyone in it. Today humans have turned Mary into a larger-than-life figure who has little in common with the real Mary. But regardless of how many tall tales we invent to turn ordinary humans into extraordinary saints and angels, there is no such thing as an intercessor between you and God. While you can tell yourself that God isn't talking to you directly, the fact remains that He is. God always deals with you directly and He always hears your prayers. Angels and demons can also hear your prayers if they are in the right position to do so, but there is no being who can interfere with your prayers reaching God or prevent Him from getting His reply to you. The theory of intercessors only encourages you to focus your soul's dependency and trust on created beings instead of on the Creator. It's a scam, and demons love it.

The theory that you need a healer to cure you or an exorcist to drive a demon out of you is a complete lie. At best, such people are just impotent props. Just as feeling someone hug you can help you connect with the fact that they care about you, God often helps humans grasp things He is saying to their souls by having them interact with a human prop. At the same time as He's encouraging

the receiver of the miracle, God is also giving the prop opportunities to grow and mature.

It's always a privilege for God to give you a front row seat to a show that He's about to put on. Whether He's speaking some message through you, or having you touch someone at the moment He heals them or boots a demon off of them, the fact that He invited you to participate in what He was going to do anyway is a gift. Will you learn the right lessons from the experience or will you start taking the bows and acting like you played a critical role in what just happened?

There is nothing to envy about healers and exorcists. Such people are as powerless as you are. Exorcists do not have the power to command demons about, but demons love to see them try. Healers do not possess a reservoir of Divine power within their beings, so when they go through their motions of trying to heal someone, they have no control over what does or doesn't happen. To try to cover for their own impotence, many healers will say that their customers are to blame if no healing is received. A lack of faith or insufficient righteousness are popular excuses here, and of course the people who are accused of such things often walk away feeling devastated and personally rejected by God, which makes them perfect candidates for the *unappeasable Judge* con.

Exorcism

So what really goes on during an exorcism? Well, first let's assume the target is actually having demon problems and not just faking it. Then what? Often a whole lot of dramatic hoopla goes into exorcisms. First there's the preparation: exorcists gather equipment that is intended to scare demons into submitting to them. Holy water, large crosses, and Bibles are standard equipment, but there's always room for more toys. As I explained in Chapter 7, these things have absolutely no effect on demons except to entertain them, and yet even well-meaning exorcists will get suckered into using them.

Once you've personally encountered a demon who is acting aggressive, you will feel very uncomfortable about going into a possession situation "unarmed." Exorcists are such suckers for

powerful prop cons because they feel those props really help them scrape up the courage to try to take on a foe who is so obviously superior to them. Confident exorcists are only confident because of the way demons have responded to them in the past. If demons work their act right, they can easily con a human into thinking he really *does* have the power to control their behavior. Remember that demons don't have the pride problems we do, and they will gladly pretend to be scared, agitated, and driven off the premises in order to con a human into taking some of the glory for what happened.

Now because humans are incapable of tracking demons who don't want to be tracked, how can you really tell if a demon has left the room? You can't. The fact that a demon suddenly falls silent or stops causing his human victim to writhe about does *not* mean the demon has been "defeated." Since demons *want* you to focus on them, the whole notion of trying to exorcise them is foolish right from the start, because in the process of exorcising demons, *everyone* is intensely focused on the demon, which is exactly what the demon wants. And yet feeling possessed is such a terrifying experience that it seems like *something* ought to be done to help the suffering person. So just what is the right way to handle possession? And what does possession even mean?

PART III: DEMONIC HARASSMENT

17. Understanding Access

All humans have three main elements to their beings: mind, body and soul. These three elements are constantly interacting with each other in many complex ways. If one element becomes stressed, the other two elements will become distressed as a result. Just as three men who are handcuffed together feel separate yet dependent on one another, your mind, soul and body each have their own priorities, abilities, and limitations, yet they still feel dependent on one another for their own well-being.

You might be having a good day until you end up trapped in a waiting room with a screaming baby. The baby's agitation soon makes you feel agitated as well. Perhaps the baby is hungry but you aren't hungry at all. The baby is having a problem that you don't have, and yet he is still causing you to feel upset by the way that he is responding to his personal situation. This is how it works with your mind, body and soul: each element has their own way of dealing with stress, and yet all elements end up negatively affected no matter which element is originally upset.

This domino effect that constantly occurs between your three elements gives demons an excellent opportunity. By just attacking one of your elements, they can succeed at stressing out the other two, which causes you to conclude that their power is far greater than it actually is.

Separating Elements & Astral Projection

In order to amplify your fear of them in the moment, demons will tell all kinds of lies about what they are able to do to you. But while they can certainly do some unpleasant things, their abilities have limits which are important to understand. One critical limitation is their inability to separate one element (such as your soul) from the rest of your being.

Astral projection is a meditative activity in which humans imagine that they are ejecting their souls from their bodies like a pilot

ejecting from a malfunctioning plane. Once the soul is flying free, it's believed to be roaming about the *astral plane*—a supernatural world where other spirits and gods can be accessed. Common motivations for getting into astral projection are to expand your understanding of spiritual matters, contact supernatural beings, spy on others (and perhaps even attack them), escape the misery of being in a body that has health problems, or to simply go on a relaxing joyride. So is it really possible for humans to thrust their souls out of their bodies whenever they feel like it? No. Astral projection is complete guff, and the “trips” people experience are nothing more than vivid hallucinations. It simply isn't hard for demons to feed your mind and senses information that will make it *seem* as if you traveled to many fantastic places while in reality your soul never left your body.

God is the only Being with the ability to separate your elements. Understanding this gives you a vital defense when demons claim that they have taken possession of your soul and are now holding it in some nasty place. The old “we've taken your soul captive” routine is a great way to utterly terrify humans and cause them to become extremely submissive to demons. This is of course what demons want you to do: capitulate and grovel to them while you assume that God has utterly abandoned you.

The Omnipresence of God

The good news is that God *never* abandons you. He is always present with you, regardless of what your soul's beliefs are. Maybe you think that God is a myth, or perhaps you personally hate Him, or perhaps you have been conned into thinking that you can actually harm God and so you've dedicated yourself to that agenda. It doesn't matter what you believe—God is still with you. Just as you can't go anywhere that doesn't have some sort of atmosphere, there is nowhere you can go to escape God's presence. Understanding this can give you a critical anchor for hope in cases of intense demonic harassment.

Different Motives for Harassment

The common understanding of *demonic possession* is that your being is like a house that demons can enter and take over. This kind of imagery is misleading. Demons cannot take you over like a piece of property to which they hold the title. The most demons can do is *temporarily* harass you. If they use certain methods of harassment, it will *feel* as if they have literally seized control of your entire being. But it is vital to remember that God always keeps demons on a tight leash, and they can only ever do what He allows them to do.

God never gives demons the option to do whatever they want with you. If He did, they would kill you in order to eliminate the possibility of you pursuing the right soul attitudes. Because demons do not have the power to kill you themselves, they will often try to get you to attempt to kill yourself in hopes that God will allow your efforts to succeed.

Now if demons have you suckered into one of the cons I discussed in Part II of this book, then they are going to be prone to messing with you in ways that will encourage you to think you are some kind of awesome. Demonic possession occurs among those who are deliberately pursuing relationships with demons, but often in these cases, the goal is not to terrorize the human, but to get him even more dedicated to pursuing supernatural entities other than God by giving him a taste of “real power.” Online you can find excited humans sharing reports of how “the Light” or some friendly spirit guide gave them the ability to make it rain or see into the future or levitate themselves. As long as you’re so deep in spiritual ignorance that you think it’s *fun* to have demons toy with you, you’re not going to be looking for help with possession issues. It’s when demons start acting malicious that you find yourself in a true crisis.

From here on, I’m going to discuss principles that will help in cases where demons are flaunting their malicious natures. Once demons show their true colors, they have abandoned the idea of trying to con you into pursuing a relationship with them, and are instead going for all out terror. In these cases, understanding what they can and can’t do to you is critical to helping you interpret your situation correctly.

Body Access

Demons can't do anything to you without God's permission. But if God does give them permission, there are a variety of ways that they can attack your body. It is a very simple thing for demons to manipulate your *senses* so that you will see, hear, and feel things that other humans may or may not experience. Demons can create sensations inside and outside of your body. A classic maneuver is to cause a chill of fear to suddenly run up your spine for no reason. A "chill of fear" is really just a set of neural sensations which your mind has learned to *interpret* as fear. Forming *mental associations* is one of the tools that all humans use to organize information and decide how they should attempt to interact with the world around them. It is impossible for you to stop yourself from forming these associations. Once a fire burns you, your mind automatically links the sight of flames to physical harm, and thanks to that association being made, you avoid getting burned again in the future. Mental associations are very beneficial, but they can also be used negatively. *Racism* is a classic example of mental associations being used to harm. In cases of racism, a whole host of negative qualities are mentally linked to a specific physical trait (often skin color), and folks who form those associations then act like *everyone* with that trait must also have all of those bad qualities. The white man says all blacks are stupid. The black man says all whites are bullies. Both men are talking like fools, but both really believe what they are saying because they have formed such strong mental associations.

Mental associations become stronger the more they are rehearsed. Demons understand this, which is why they will repeat the same lie to you many times in an effort to get you to really believe it. They will also take advantage of any mental associations that you already have.

Perhaps you're sitting in your room, reading a book when a demon decides that he wants to scare you. He knows that you already have a strong mental association between feeling a certain kind of neural sensation in your spine and being in serious danger. The demon then causes that neural sensation to happen in your body, which is as easy for him as playing a quick set of notes on a piano. When you feel the sensation, your mind instantly thinks, "I must be in danger!" It thinks this because of a mental association

you already formed during previous life experiences. The demon now plants an image in your mind of some creepy character slinking up the stairs of your home. Just as you can hold up a picture in someone else's face, demons can easily create images in your mind. They often work through images instead of words, because images communicate more information faster.

So now a demon has toyed with your spine and planted an image in your mind. With these two basic tricks, he has effectively convinced you that there is an intruder in your home. Naturally you will wonder what the intruder is planning. Demons can hear all of your thoughts, and the demon toying with you instantly provides you with an explanation. The kind of story the demon invents will be designed to freak you out, and to do that well, the demon will first scan through your memories to see what your personal history is. Suppose you were sexually assaulted in the past and you still feel quite traumatized by that experience. This is perfect for the demon, who now tells you that the man creeping up the stairs in your home is planning to rape you. This idea sends your mind into a panic. Because your mind panics, your body and soul panic. You are now sitting on your bed completely terrified and the demon is finding all of this terribly amusing. In real life, there is no one in your home at all. You are perfectly safe, but you are now going to feel upset for hours thanks to the demon's clever tricks.

Mind Access

While you can only recall very limited information about your life, demons can access your entire memory archive. While you are often in denial about what your current fears and insecurities are, demons can easily access all of that data. Because demons know you better than you know yourself, they are able to plant very upsetting ideas into your mind.

Demons communicate with you using both words and pictures. They can perfectly imitate your thought voice, which results in you mistaking their planted thoughts for your own ideas. Consider the difference between someone else saying "I wish you would go kill yourself!" and thinking that *you* are the one who wants to kill

yourself. Tricking you into taking responsibility for producing their planted thoughts is a key strategy for demons and they successfully pull this trick on *all humans*. In real life, so many of the thoughts you hear in your mind are not originating from you at all, yet once you assume ownership of them, you respond accordingly.

In the midst of intense harassment sessions, demons will work hard to influence how you interpret what is going on. They will tell you fantastic exaggerations about themselves, while at the same time making many false claims about God. Planting the image of God scowling down at you is a very effective way to make you believe that God is angry with you or punishing you. Whispering thoughts in your mind that are phrased to sound like God is talking to you is another very effective way to lead you astray about what is happening. *“I am so disappointed in you,”* can easily sound like God to someone who is already racked with guilt over some bad thing that they’ve done. *“You deserve to suffer,”* is another ominous thought that can easily sound like God is not only the One tormenting you, but that He is enjoying watching you writhe. Planting thoughts and then getting you to misinterpret where those thoughts originated from is a critical element of demonic harassment.

Because God is often blocking demons from directly attacking your physical body, they usually focus on your mind as their main target. Once they upset your mind, your body and soul will become upset as well.

Soul Access

Your soul is the part of your being that relates to God. When you talk to God, you always use your soul, not your mind or body. The prayers that you hear in your mind are produced by your mind *repeating* parts of what it heard your soul and God saying to each other and *translating* those non-verbal exchanges into verbal thoughts. You might think of your soul and God like two men who are having a private discussion in a closed room. As they talk, your mind is the man who is standing out in the hallway, pressing his ear against the door and eavesdropping on what is being said. Your

soul and your mind are constantly monitoring each other, but they have different personal priorities.

Your mind couldn't care less about God or morals or the true meaning of life. Your mind is primarily focused on *keeping you safe* and *keeping your entire being running well*. When your body needs nourishment, your mind wants to get it some, and it doesn't have a moral qualm about stealing food. Because your *social status* can directly affect your *safety*, your mind doesn't want to get you involved in activities that might encourage other people to harm you. But it's an entirely different motivation to not do a crime for fear of *being harmed* than it is because you don't like the idea of *acting immoral*.

Your soul is the only part of you that cares about morality, but your soul cares about this issue very much because your soul needs to feel that you are a *respectable being*. Your soul's moral code is constantly changing in response to your experiences in life. As your soul changes its beliefs, it changes its assessment of how *respectable* you are. Once your soul decides that pleasing God is an important priority, things get even more complicated. Because your mind and body don't care about God, they will often want to pursue activities that align with *their* priorities. Your body's main priorities are to *feel good* and *be safe*. Many things that make your body *feel good* grossly violate your soul's moral code. Since your mind doesn't care about morals, it will often support what your body wants to do and vice versa. This results in a lot of conflicts in which it is two against one.

It is your soul that demons want to influence, because your soul's choices and attitudes are what determine how pleased God is with you. But while your soul is the main target for demons, it is also the element that they have the least access to. While demons can physically wound your body, they cannot wound your soul. While they can interfere with your mental processes to the point that your mind feels overwhelmed and unable to function properly, they cannot do *anything* to block your soul's ability to talk to God. The fact that demons are incapable of physically harming your soul, muting your soul, relocating your soul, or cutting off its access to God is a major vulnerability that you want to exploit as much as possible. Whenever demons start hassling you, talking to God is your best possible

response because in talking to Him, you are focusing on a *soul activity* which demons *cannot disrupt*. Certainly they will say (and often scream) that they have cut off your soul's access to God. But here is where you need to remember that demons are chronic liars.

18. Possession

While there are many humans who will accuse you of being possessed by evil spirits whenever they personally disapprove of the way you are behaving, *you* will probably not consider yourself possessed until you experience being forced to do things that you don't want to do.

I need to put in a caution here, because there are many situations of severe psychological distress that can cause your mind to override your body in ways that will make you feel like you're having an out of body experience: watching yourself do things that you don't want to do, yet being unable to stop yourself. This is often what is going on in cases of rage attacks, panic attacks, and many forms of assault. At the same time, there are very logical reasons why your mind will *prevent* your body from doing something that your *soul* wants it to do. A classic example here is the soldier whose body freezes up and refuses to rush out into danger in order to save his buddy. Assuming that you are possessed when you're not will result in all kinds of unnecessary stress, so it's useful to consider other possibilities. The more you grind forward in life refusing to acknowledge your fears and stresses, the more likely it is that you will experience your mind pushing you into extreme behaviors as a way of trying to cope.

Now in true possession cases, people experience demons forcing them to behave in a wide variety of ways. In such moments, it's easy to feel like the electric car that a boy forces to move about by pushing buttons on his remote control. Demons might throw your body into fits of convulsions that you can't stop. They might cause you to start screaming involuntarily, or speak in a voice that you don't recognize as your own. They might cause your body to move in ways that you can't normally move in without doing serious harm to yourself.

Your body is a lot stronger than you realize. This is because your full *potential strength* is not something you can usually access. Your mind maintains protective barriers to stop you from attempting a

maneuver that could potentially harm your body, such as lifting a car or breaking out of metal handcuffs. There are many impressive feats that you could do *once* before sustaining severe injuries that would prevent you from giving a repeat performance. Because demons are able to remove the internal safety blocks that prevent you from accessing all of your *potential strength*, they can cause you to perform feats that appear to others as being superhuman. They can also amplify your strength in a moment by adding some of their own. For example, if you've never punched anyone in the face, your first attempt at a punch would probably be rather weak. You would naturally hesitate out of fear that slamming your fingers into someone's jawbone will hurt. And of course it does hurt, and after you punch someone once, your hand will want you to knock it off. But if a demon were to take control of your arm, he could swing it forward with far greater force than you could, shocking your target with the force of your blow. Possessed people are often viewed as having superhuman strength due to the wild stunts that demons perform through them. To a demon who hates you and doesn't care a wit about how much pain you are in, your body becomes a bat that he can ram others with. Trying to physically restrain someone who has demons controlling their bodily functions can be impossible to do. Trying to have a rational conversation with people in this condition can also be impossible as demons will often force the person to give sarcastic and nonsensical answers, or simply make so much noise that conversation is impossible.

In practice, people tend to use the term *possession* to mean *I can sense that there is some other entity controlling my body*. Even though the control in these cases is very limited, victims of possession often assume they are being completely controlled. Yet there is a big difference between a demon being able to make your legs jerk around involuntarily and being able to stop your heart. Remember that if demons had their way, they would kill you. The fact that people don't die the moment they become possessed demonstrates just how limited the power of demons really is.

Catching & Channeling Demons

The theory that being near a possessed person increases your chances of being possessed is complete rubbish. Demons cannot do anything to you without God's permission, and God's plans for you are specific to you. God only allows demons to harass you when He feels the experience could benefit you spiritually. If that is not the case, you can go to lunch with 50 possessed people and not have any demon jump on you.

Demons always lie, and once it becomes clear that someone is possessed and all the humans are panicking, demons will often say things to try and influence how you interpret the situation. In some cases, they might accuse someone in the audience of channeling them to the possessed person. This is more nonsense. You're not a bus that demons hop aboard and ride over to another human. You should never take responsibility for causing someone to be possessed because this is beyond your abilities as a mere mortal. Always go back to the power structure. The fact that demons are above you means you cannot control them, and that includes transporting them around and sicking them on other people. Any human who tries to take credit for sicking demons on someone has been suckered by the *submissive servant* con. Demons do not take orders from us, but they do enjoy blaming us for what they do if they see an opportunity to plunge us into guilt.

The Jesus Shield

Christians often promote the theory that once you give your allegiance to Jesus Christ, it becomes impossible for demons to possess you because Jesus erects some kind of magic shield around your being. This is dangerous teaching which causes many sincere God seekers to feel rejected by God if they start getting harassed in certain ways.

Where do we draw the line between possession and harassment? If demons are screaming in your mind or causing you to see scary things, does that count as possession? Or do you need to be physically convulsing and growling like an animal? Trying to split hairs like this is not helpful. To the person being targeted, any form of harassment is upsetting.

The kinds of theatrics that demons use to terrorize humans are endless. Some people see creatures scurrying about in their homes. Some people experience creatures crawling on their actual bodies. Some people experience demons sexually assaulting them or physically beating them. God does not make specific guarantees about how far He will and won't let demons go with you. All you can be sure of is that whatever He allows will have the potential to benefit you if you are willing to be teachable.

Other humans and demons are not authorized to judge you. You and God know whether or not you sincerely want to please Him. If you do, then He *is* pleased with you, regardless of what shenanigans demons are up to. God is extremely easy to succeed with, and anyone who says differently doesn't know Him very well.

Sexual Assault

Demons are not sexual beings, they do not have sperm, and they cannot impregnate you. Of course they will lie their faces off and tell you that they've come to create some devil child within you and any other nonsense that you are willing to believe. But in real life, when demons sexually assault you for real (instead of just giving you terrifying dreams of being assaulted by them), they are simply using a form of physical attack. They are not putting you at risk of getting any kind of sexually transmitted disease because they are not human and do not become diseased the way that we do. It is not possible for humans and demons to breed.

The main targets demons get sexual with are humans who have been sexually assaulted by other humans in the past. The goal here is to terrorize you, and nothing terrifies humans more than having their worst fears turned into reality. One of the natural side effects of being sexually assaulted is an intense fear of it happening again. Demons know all about how psychological trauma works, and they will try to use your unresolved stresses against you. In many cases of this kind of assault, demons create terrifying nightmares in which monsters are assaulting you. Because the dreams are sexual in nature, and because you have been traumatized by sexual activities in the past, your body will naturally respond with sexual arousal

when these images are put in your mind. In these situations, it is perfectly normal to wake up in a state of arousal or having just climaxed. This kind of response is not your fault, it's not disgusting, it doesn't mean you are a pervert, that you have the essence of demons in you, or that they have stolen your reproductive materials. Remember: ***demons are not sexual beings.***

Now there's an important caution here. Because of the way minds deal with sexual assault, your mind can easily manufacture a dream of you being sexually assaulted by a monster *without* demons being involved. Dreams are an important tool that your mind uses to help itself stay in good health. In dreams, your mind will often substitute real people for symbolic characters. A monster can easily feel like an appropriate stand in for the human who assaulted you in the past. Dreams like this are a result of your mind expressing how upset it is by what happened to you. Again, this is not your fault, it's not something you chose, and it's not any indication that you are immoral, disgusting or perverse. Distressing sexual dreams are a completely normal side effect of being sexually assaulted in real life. It is also completely normal for your body to react to sexual dreams by becoming sexually aroused. So before you decide that demons are attacking you in the night, it's helpful to consider that the dream might simply be your own mind expressing its stress in a normal and creative way.

Helping Possessed People

So what can you do to help someone who is possessed or being terrorized by demons? The best thing you can do is encourage them to talk to God. Encourage them to ask God to help them learn the lessons that He wants to teach them and to help them grow closer to Him through the experience. It is also very helpful to encourage the person to focus on the four essential soul attitudes.

Demons cannot stop any soul from talking to God. Even while they are screaming in your mind and causing your body to writhe about, your soul can still talk to God. This is the advantage of having three separate elements to your being: they can all be doing different things at the same time. Demons will of course try to intimidate you

into *not* talking to God because they are afraid of losing their influence over you. Demons do *not* want you to go running to God in the middle of their performance. They want you to remain focused on them.

Helping possessed people focus on God in the moment is far more useful than spritzing them with holy water or quoting Bible verses. Humans have no power to drive demons away, and the sooner we stop screaming “In the Name of Jesus!” the sooner we can start being of actual help to the suffering person.

Praying model prayers out loud that the possessed person can agree with can be very helpful. It’s hard to think when demons are screaming at you and jerking you about. Prayers that are worded to focus on the four essential soul attitudes can help victims pull their focus off of demons and concentrate on what they want to say to God. But let’s be clear: the goal is *not* to pray *for* the victims—it’s to help them focus on their own prayers.

Praying for other people is a complete waste of time because God does not allow you to control how He deals with other humans. The popular idea that God pays more attention to you if you have a lot of religious friends praying for you is a complete myth. The idea that God listens more to popular people or to people with fancy titles is also rubbish. If we’re going to help victims of harassment, we need to model correct beliefs, not encourage them to believe in a bunch of lies. So you don’t pray *for* the victims. Instead, you *model* a way of praying and then let them choose to agree with that model or ignore it. For example:

“God, we know that You are only allowing this to give us an opportunity to grow closer to You (TRUST). Please help us to learn everything that You want to teach us (SUBMISSION). We know that You are in control of this situation and that You are infinitely more powerful than demons (REVERENCE). We know that demons cannot do anything without Your permission (DEPENDENCY). We know that You will force them to leave after Your will has been accomplished (TRUST). We want to honor You in the way that we respond to what You are doing (SUBMISSION). Help us to please You in this situation (SUBMISSION). Thank You for never abandoning us (TRUST).”

This is an excellent prayer because it practices all four essential attitudes and it keeps the focus on God's supremacy. Focusing on the fact that God is in control of the situation will help everyone involved and work against what demons are trying to accomplish.

19. Keeping Demons in Perspective

There is an enormous difference between what demons would like to do to you and what they are allowed to do. Let's use a card metaphor. Suppose I have a deck of 52 cards, and after I place three cards on a table in front of you, I say "You can choose any card you want." While my offer *sounds* generous, the fact remains that I am refusing to give you access to 49 of the cards. This is how it always works with you, demons and God. While it's helpful to understand what demons *could* do to you, it's critical to remember that God is *always* forcing them to choose between just a few options. It's maddening for demons, and yet there is nothing they can do about it. If you could see things from their perspective, you would fear them much less, because you'd see what pathetic little puppets they are. To keep you terrified of them, demons need to distract you from the fact that God is always keeping them on a tight leash. They mainly do this by making an endless series of empty threats. *We're going to give you cancer. We're going to kill your spouse. We're going to take your soul when you die.* Demons want you to perceive them as powerful monsters who only hesitate to act because they get sadistic pleasure out of watching you stress. But in real life, demons don't want to just *talk* about trashing you—they want to *do* it.

The endless talk of demons is an attempt to distract you from how limited their options really are. If you were to sit down and think about the past, you could undoubtedly make a long list of bad things that you spent a lot of time anticipating only to have those things never occur. Demons don't want you to notice that the vast majority of their threats are a bunch of hot air. To try and prevent you from looking back, they keep coming up with new things for you to stress about right now.

If they can't keep you from realizing how restricted they are by God, demons shift gears and try to turn God's power over them into evidence that He is against you. *What does it say about God that He lets us torment you like this? Obviously God doesn't care about*

you, or He'd stop us from bothering you. As always, the goal is to drive your soul away from the four essential attitudes.

When demons are trying to convince you that they are more powerful than they are, they are trying to get you to *revere* them more than you do God. When they tell you God is an Ogre for letting them attack you, they are trying to erode your soul's *trust* in God. The essential soul attitude of trust says, *"God is for me and He wants me to succeed with Him. Even when He does things that upset me, I can know that He is acting with my best in mind."*

It is quite true that God will turn every rotten thing that happens to you into a blessing if you are willing to practice the right soul attitudes. Most of those blessings will come in the form of insights that will help you mature into a better version of yourself. God created you with a specific plan in mind. He doesn't *need* that plan to happen, but if it does, you will certainly be a lot happier. As you go through life, God sets up circumstances and opportunities for you to respond to. Everything He does in your life is strategically designed to give you the *option* of experiencing His ideal plan for you—ideal in the sense that it is the plan which *you* will find most pleasant.

God is like a reader who enjoys books that end in a variety of ways and never gets bummed out by sad endings. Contrary to what many religions will tell you, God really doesn't feel threatened by the idea of you squandering all of the opportunities He gives you. God is like a very wise man in a café who offers to mentor you. If you turn down his offer, he's fine with that. If you take him up on it, you'll greatly benefit.

Demons really miss the mark when they assume that they can devastate God by persuading humans to cling to rebellious soul attitudes. If the entire human race were to spit in God's face and say "We hate You!", God would pour His wrath down on our heads, smile, and say "Well, that was a fun game." If instead the whole human race were to reverentially submit to Him, He'd shower us with rewards and be equally pleased. The key principle to understand here is that *you* are the only one who stands to lose by acting like a punk with God. If you decide to be wise and listen to God, He will gladly take you through a maturity process that will result in you

experiencing His ideal plan for you. But He will not let you choose how that process works. If you want to thrive as God's creature, you must submit to His methods, and one of the methods He uses to mature humans is demonic harassment.

If God is allowing demons to harass you in any way, then there is a positive lesson to be learned. Asking God to help you learn what He wants to teach you through the experience is the wisest way to respond to demons. The far more popular response of putting all of your energy into figuring out how to make the demons leave is a waste of time. You can't make demons leave. Only God can flick demons away from you, so if you want God to get demons off of your case, you need to focus on being teachable.

God is a very purposeful Being, and He never allows demons to attack you without a productive reason. When we start chanting Bible verses and flinging holy water and waving crosses, we are not being teachable, we're trying to seize control of the situation. We're also acting like our comfort in the moment is all that really matters when the truth is that there are far more important issues at hand. Just as a nice paycheck can make a lot of hard work feel worthwhile, spiritual maturity is a treasure that is worth paying any price to gain. Just as a child can't imagine how he will feel when he is an adult, you can't imagine how much spiritual maturity will change your perspective of yourself, life, God, and everything else. When you reach adulthood, do you want to go back to being a toddler? Of course not, because you've learned to value all that you've learned, even though there were some hard seasons that you had to get through. In the same way, becoming spiritually mature causes you to look back and *honestly* feel that all of the tough lessons God put you through turned out to be well worth it. While we humans don't love the fact that God has put us in a redemptive story, the fact remains that He designed us to thrive in this kind of plot.

20. Rules of Engagement

When demons are interacting with you, they instinctively fall into some predictable patterns of behavior. Understanding what those patterns are can really help you, so here are some of the most important ones:

Rule #1: Demons talk when they can't act.

Demons don't want to just *talk* about harming you, they want to follow through. But since God is constantly blocking them, the best they can do is bluster at you the way a dog who is chained to a leash barks his head off in order to scare you and keep you distracted from the fact that he is being restrained. Once you understand this first rule, you can gain a lot of insight about what's really going on by simply reversing whatever they are saying to you. For example:

- *You have a malignant tumor growing inside of you. = We wish we could give you cancer but God won't let us.*
- *We're going to kill you. = We wish we could kill you off but God won't let us.*
- *You're going to get terrible news soon. = God is arranging for something really good to happen to you that we can't find a way to stop.*
- *We've taken your soul captive. = We can't gain access to your soul, darn it.*

Rule #2: Demons lie about how God currently views you.

You can't read God's mind, but demons are happy to tell you what He currently thinks of you. If you are already clinging to rotten

soul attitudes, they will tell you that God thinks you're doing great. If you're doing great, they'll convince you God is upset with you. Their goal is always to drive you off course, which is why it's actually a good sign when they are insisting that God has some kind of beef with you. For example:

- *God is mad at you. = God is pleased with you.*
- *God thinks you're amazing. = God thinks you need to get over yourself.*

Now since both God and demons say encouraging and corrective things to you, you need to understand more about how to discern between the two before you can know when to reverse a statement. An easy way to discern between God and demons is to understand these principles:

- When God is displeased with you, He will be *specific* about what the problem is.
- If God wants you to do something to amend a situation, He will be *clear* about what to do, and He will give you instructions which are *doable* given your *current resources*.
- When God has a problem with you, He always gives you a way to *immediately* get back into a good place with Him.
- If you know the problem, but not the solution, then you're not hearing from God.

Whenever you start feeling distressed and worried that God is mad at you, ask yourself the following questions:

- Why is God upset with me? What specific thing have I done?
- Do I have a clear understanding of what I can do to immediately be back in God's good graces? Is what I need to do possible given my current resources?

When demons are trying to imitate God's Voice and give you *false conviction*, they will:

- Present you with a problem that is vague or impossible to fix.
- Give you no solution, or a solution that is impossible to carry out with your current resources.

Let's run through some examples of thoughts you might hear in your mind and practice applying these discernment principles.

Thought #1: "I'll never forgive you for getting an abortion."

- ☒ Is the problem vague or specific?

Specific – You got an abortion.

- ☒ Are you being told how to fix the problem?

No

- ☒ Based on these answers, where did this thought come from?

Demons

Thought #2: "You were rude to your wife. Apologize."

- ☒ Is the problem vague or specific?

Specific – You were rude.

- ☒ Are you being told how to fix the problem?

Yes – Apologize.

- ☒ Is the solution possible given your current resources?

Yes

- ☒ Based on these answers, where did this thought come from?

God

Thought #3: "You really disappoint me."

- ☒ Is the problem vague or specific?

Vague – Why are you disappointing?

- ☒ Are you being told how to fix the problem?

No

- ☒ Based on these answers, where did this thought come from?

Demons

Thought #4: "You should have never married this woman. I told you not to, but you didn't listen."

☒ Is the problem vague or specific?

Specific – You disobeyed God's advice about who to marry.

☒ Are you being told how to fix the problem?

No

☒ Based on these answers, where did this thought come from?

Demons

Thought #5: "From now on, you need to trust me and stop doubting my love for you."

☒ Is the problem vague or specific?

Specific – You keep doubting that God loves you.

☒ Are you being told how to fix the problem?

Yes – Never doubt.

☒ Is the solution possible given your current resources?

No – It's impossible for humans to never doubt.

☒ Based on these answers, where did this thought come from?

Demons

It was easy to identify the source of these thoughts just using a simple discernment test. But sometimes you'll need to consider more factors before you can properly identify who is speaking. In the back of this book, you'll find charts that will help you better understand how to discern between God convicting you and demons trying to *imitate* God convicting you.

Rule #3: Demons want you dead.

God put you on this earth to give you opportunities to practice the right soul attitudes. Demons want you to die so you won't have any more opportunities to make wise spiritual choices. This means that any time you hear voices urging you to kill yourself, you can know that is demons talking to you.

Whenever demons want you to do something, the best strategy is to do just the opposite. If demons tell you to kill yourself, refuse to do so. If they want you to injure yourself, do something nice for yourself. If they seem to get agitated whenever you do a certain

activity, then keep doing it. If they keep pushing you to do a certain activity, try to avoid it. Remember that demons hate you and want to see you miserable, so any time they start getting specific with their instructions, you need to do just the opposite.

Rule #4: Demons exaggerate their own power and abilities.

This is true when demons are trying to terrify you. If they are trying to pump up your ego instead, they will *minimize* their abilities. Either way, *demons always lie*, and this means that by reversing what they are saying to you, you can get a much more accurate picture of truth. For example:

We think you're great. = We think you're pathetic.

We are afraid of you. = We are not afraid of you.

You can control us. = You can't control us.

We can destroy you. = We can't destroy you.

We can control you. = We can't control you.

We will never let you go. = We will have to let you go soon.

Our power is unlimited. = Our power is very limited.

Rule #5: Demons try to keep you focused on them.

Demons will do anything to keep your focus on them and on what they are saying to you. This is because they know that humans feel more influenced by whoever they focus on. It's like you paying full attention to your enemy screaming a bunch of nasty things at you versus you popping in some headphones and pushing her voice into the background. When you give her your full attention, you end up far more upset by what she says.

Recognizing Demons In Action

Let's now see how understanding these five principles about demons can help you in the moment.

Rule #1	<i>Demons talk when they can't act.</i>
Demon Behavior	<i>You hear demons yammering the same threats at you over and over again. Their tone is very confident.</i>
Automatic Response	<i>You find the threats convincing and instantly accept them as facts, which causes you to feel very anxious and stressed.</i>
Best Response	<i>Remember that demons don't want to just talk, they want to act. The fact that they aren't able to follow through on their threats proves they are currently being blocked by God, therefore you have nothing to worry about.</i>

Rule #2	<i>Demons lie about how God currently views you.</i>
Demon Behavior	<i>You hear demons declaring that God is either pleased or displeased with you. Often these declarations are very broad and non-specific.</i>
Automatic Response	<i>If your soul attitudes are already lousy, you will like what demons say. If your soul attitudes are good, you'll feel distressed and discouraged.</i>
Best Response	<i>Review the four essential soul attitudes. (Reverence) Do you understand that God is far superior to humans and demons in every way? (Submission) Do you want to care more about pleasing God than you do about pleasing yourself? (Dependency) Do you recognize that you can't do anything apart from God, therefore it is obnoxious to act like you can accomplish anything on your own? (Trust) Do you want to believe that God is good and that He has positive motivations towards you? If you can answer YES to these questions, you are choosing the right soul attitudes, which means you can know that God is pleased with you.</i>

Rule #3	<i>Demons want you dead.</i>
Demon Behavior	<i>You keep feeling prompted to kill or injure yourself. You keep hearing voices telling you how your life isn't worth living or that you deserve to die. You are receiving specific instructions on how you can proceed with a suicide attempt.</i>
Automatic Response	<i>Worn down by repetition, you start seriously considering killing yourself.</i>
Best Response	<i>Remember that demons want you dead so that you will not experience God's best for you. Why should you listen to beings who hate you and only want to see you suffer? Refuse to do what they want and put away any tools that you could potentially use to harm yourself.</i>

Rule #4	<i>Demons exaggerate their own power and abilities.</i>
Demon Behavior	<i>You hear bold, often dramatic threats being made as demons describe themselves as being undefeatable, terrifying beings.</i>
Automatic Response	<i>You mistake confidence for truth and feel terrified of them.</i>
Best Response	<i>Remember the power structure. Demons are mere carpet lint compared to God. Demons depend on God to sustain them, and at any moment, He could uncreate them. Why should you fear such impotent beings? Focus on God and on His great power.</i>

Rule #5	<i>Demons try to keep you focused on them.</i>
Demon Behavior	<i>Demons use a mix of the above strategies and other theatrics to try to turn your focus onto them.</i>
Automatic Response	<i>Upset and alarmed by the methods demons are using, you give them your complete attention.</i>
Best Response	<i>Recognize the negative influence that demons are having on you and remember that you can lessen their influence by splitting your attention. Engage in distracting activities like reading, listening to music, talking to other humans, or watching TV to make it impossible for demons to have all of your attention.</i>

A demon's life is an endless rotation between cooking up schemes to work on humans and watching those schemes get foiled by God. Thanks to God's constant intervention, we never see demons' best ideas unfold. The most we ever experience are brief snatches of their brilliant schemes—fleeting moments that are cut short before they have a chance to do the damage that demons wanted to do.

Imagine spending your whole life trying to start a massive forest fire, only to have most of your matches break before they light. The few times you do get a flame started, it never gets far before a random storm scoots in and douses the flames with rain. Worst of

all, the ground you scorched ends up covered in fresh shoots of new plants that never would have had a chance to develop if it weren't for your pranks. This is the impossible situation demons find themselves in. Even when their plans seem to be unfolding very well and humans are being entirely cooperative, unexpected problems arise. The popular sorcerer who was leading so many astray with his promotion of the dark arts suddenly has a change of heart and decides to submit to God. The arrogant pastor who was doing such a fine job of misrepresenting God from his pulpit suddenly has an aha moment and embraces a soul attitude of reverential submission. Demons work so hard and yet their best projects are constantly turning sour on them. For all of their pompous boasting of how they rule the world and intimidate God, the reality is that demons are constantly scrambling to anticipate what God is going to do next so that they can try to get in His way. If they weren't such spiritual morons, they'd realize how utterly futile it is to think that they could ever succeed at hampering God. But then again, they're demons, so should we even be surprised?

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anna believes that establishing a personal relationship with God is the only way that humans can find true satisfaction and peace, but that the journey will unfold very differently for each human. She teaches spiritual principles in a way that will guide people in the right direction while leaving plenty of room for their personal experiences of God to vary.

CHARTS

SOUL ATTITUDES

FACTS ABOUT GOD	RIGHT RESPONSES	WRONG RESPONSES
God is a Being with infinite power & He can use that power to greatly harm us.	Reverence. <i>"Since You have the power to harm me, I will not dare to give You a bunch of attitude. Instead, I am going to deeply respect You and make pleasing You my top priority."</i>	Irreverence. <i>"I refuse to be impressed by Your great power. I'm going to take my chances with defying You. I'm sure Your bark is worse than Your bite."</i>
As the Creator of all things, God is the Supreme Authority over all that exists. He cannot be threatened, manipulated, or defeated.	Submission. <i>"Since You infinitely outrank me, I am going to yield to Your will and accept Your decisions even when I strongly dislike what You're doing."</i>	Domination. <i>"I refuse to treat You as superior to me. Instead, I insist that You submit to me. I expect You to obey my instructions, align with my preferences, and make pleasing me a high priority."</i>
God designed humans to be totally dependent on Him in every area. Humans are incapable of evolving into creatures who are less than totally dependent on their Creator.	Dependency. <i>"I recognize that I can do nothing apart from You, therefore trying to oppose Your will for my life is a waste of time."</i> Humility. <i>"Because I can do nothing without Your help, I do not deserve the glory for anything. I will glorify You alone."</i>	Autonomy. <i>"I am my own master, the controller of my own destiny. I don't need Your help to accomplish my own agenda."</i> Arrogance. <i>"I am going to greatly exaggerate my abilities and take full credit for the things You accomplish in my life."</i>
God is good in Character, He is infinitely wise, & He enjoys helping humans thrive spiritually.	Trust. <i>"Because You are good in Character and so much wiser than I am, I am going to trust that Your priorities for me are better than my own."</i>	Doubt. <i>"I believe that I am better and wiser than You are in many areas, which is why my assessment of what I need is more accurate than Yours. If You really loved me, You'd do what I believe is best for me right now. The fact that You won't just proves how mean You really are."</i>

HOW GOD JUDGES YOU

VS.

HOW HUMANS JUDGE YOU

ASPECT OF JUDGMENT	WHAT HUMANS SAY
What Really Matters	"Talk is cheap. How you behave reveals your true priorities."
Ability	"If you really want to do it, you'll find a way."
God's Involvement	"God will always give you the resources you need to do the right thing. So if you do the wrong thing, you are clearly refusing to use the resources God has given you, therefore you are a spiritual rebel."
God's Dependency On Humans	"God depends on us to help Him carry out His plans for others. So when we refuse to obey, He not only punishes us for our own sins, but He also blames us for the effects our choices have on others."
Ranking Sins	"If your culture finds certain behaviors particularly offensive, so does God. God is led by human bias, which means that He considers murder worse than a little white lie."
Forgiveness	"You can't get back into a good place with God until the humans you've hurt forgive you."
Human Influence	"Other humans can influence God's opinion of you. If you upset people who are super righteous or who have important roles in God's eyes, then God will side with them against you and let them influence His opinion of you."
Ease of Success	"What we demand from you is going to constantly change, so even though we may approve of you today, that can change at any moment. You can't ever feel secure with us, since we might suddenly turn against you at any time. We're fickle, and we like it that way."

ASPECT OF JUDGMENT	WHAT GOD SAYS
What Really Matters	"Intentions are more important than actions. Humans often behave in a way that is contradictory to their true desires and values."
Ability	"Wanting to do something is not the same as having the resources to carry out your desires."
God's Involvement	"I will often withhold the resources you need to follow through on your desire to do right. What I care most about is how your soul responds to me. When you sincerely desire to obey Me, I count that as obedience even when you don't have the ability to follow through with actions."
God's Dependency On Humans	"I don't need help from anyone. When you intentionally disobey Me, I hold you accountable for your wrong attitude towards Me. I do not hold you accountable for how others respond to your choices, because that is beyond your control. You are incapable of messing up My plans for others because I do not give you that kind of power. Instead, I use your choice to create opportunities for others to draw closer to Me. Whether you decide to obey or disobey Me, it all furthers My agenda."
Ranking Sins	"I don't care about cultural stereotypes and personal biases. I rank the severity of sins not by what was done, but by the soul attitudes involved. Some people do horrible things without knowing better. Others do minor things while they are intentionally spitting in My face. It's not what you do that determines how angry I am with you—it's why you are doing it. How informed you are about what I want, and how you personally value Me is going to affect how I assess your behavior."
Forgiveness	"Human opinion is irrelevant when it comes to your relationship with Me. It's how your soul is responding to Me that determines whether or not we're in a good place. If you sincerely desire to please Me then I am going to be pleased with you regardless of how many humans might be holding grudges against you."
Human Influence	"No one tells Me how to think. I choose My own friends and enemies. No human can change the way I view you or control how I dispense mercy and grace."
Ease of Success	"I am very easy to succeed with because My requirements are simple and they do not change. You need to reverentially submit to Me as the Supreme Authority that I am, and make pleasing Me your top priority. When that is your bottom line, you and I will be in a very good place. My approval is easy to gain, and easy to keep."

TRUE CONVICTION

Source	True convictions come from God.
Purpose	To improve your relationship with God by educating you about what He wants and giving you opportunities to cultivate soul attitudes which please Him.
Clarity	God's convictions are always clear and specific. If He is telling you to do something, you will know exactly what it is. If He is teaching you a new principle, you will immediately understand what it is.
Requirements	God's convictions come in two forms: EDUCATIONAL CONVICTIONS expand your understanding of truth without requiring any immediate changes in your behavior. CORRECTIVE CONVICTIONS point out a specific attitude or action that God wants you to change, and they clarify what the right attitude or action is.
How You Feel	<i>"I know exactly what is wrong and what God wants me to do about it."</i> <i>"What God is asking me to do is something I can actually do—it's not something impossible."</i> <i>"God is drawing me closer to Him by teaching me more about who He is and how I can please Him."</i>
Examples of True Conviction	<i>"What you said to your son was very wounding. I want you to apologize to him."</i> <i>"You're being too flirtatious with your coworker. Take back your invitation to take her to lunch and take your wife out instead."</i> <i>"You need to stop believing whatever you read about Me on the internet without even asking Me if it's true or not."</i> <i>"When you start watching porn, you stop talking to Me. That needs to change. I want to help you with this struggle, so stop shutting Me out and start talking to Me about your frustration."</i> <i>"You need to stop telling Me that I can't forgive you for having an abortion. It is not your place to tell Me how I can dispense My grace. If I want to forgive you, that is a choice I get to make, and you need to respect it."</i>

FALSE CONVICTION

Source	False convictions originate from demons and/or humans who are not speaking for God, even though they will often claim to be.
Purpose	To drive you away from God by making you feel rejected and hopeless in your relationship with Him.
Clarity	False convictions are often vague, resulting in you feeling very distressed but with no clear understanding of how you can fix the problem. When false convictions are clear and specific, they are focused on problems which you are incapable of fixing. This results in you feeling like a hopeless failure.
Requirements	False convictions come in two forms: CONDEMNATION harps on something you cannot change—such as a past action or natural quality about yourself—and insists that your failure to correct the problem is causing God to reject and/or hate you. VAGUE CONVICTIONS often come paired with a sense of urgency that something is terribly wrong between you and God, and until you do something about it, you'll never get into a good place with Him.
How You Feel	<i>"I know God is upset with me, but I don't understand why."</i> <i>"I understand why God is mad at me, but I don't know what I can do to fix it."</i> <i>"God is demanding something from me that I am not able to give Him."</i> <i>"God is making it clear that I'll never be able to succeed with Him, so why keep trying?"</i>
Examples of False Conviction	<i>"You're such a rotten parent. Everything you do is wrong."</i> <i>"Sleaze. How can you even look at another woman when you're a married man? Your lustful attitude disgusts Me."</i> <i>"All homosexuals will burn in Hell. You're such a disgusting pervert."</i> <i>"Don't you dare talk to Me when you're participating in such a vile activity. You despicable worm! Any true follower of Mine would never watch such filth."</i> <i>"You took the life of an innocent child. Baby killer. Murderess. I'll never forgive you for this."</i>

EDUCATIONAL CONVICTIONS FROM GOD

What is God's purpose?	• To teach you something new and expand your understanding of truth. • To correct a false belief that you have. • To equip you with information that will help you improve your FUTURE choices and actions.
What ACTION does God want you to take?	None. God is simply teaching you new information.
What is God's attitude towards you?	Positive. He does not expect you to already know what He is teaching you because it is new information.
What is the CORRECT way for you to respond?	Accept the new information that God is teaching you and revise your beliefs to align with it.
Should you also repent?	NO. God is simply teaching you something that you didn't know before. He is not upset with you for not acting on this information in the past.
What is the WRONG way for you to respond?	• Refuse to accept the new information God is telling you. • Refuse to change beliefs that you now know are wrong. • Start wallowing in shame and insist that God is mad at you for doing wrong in the past, even though you didn't know any better.

EXAMPLES OF EDUCATIONAL CONVICTIONS

All you need to do is change your view.

#1	When Jane got an abortion 6 years ago, she did not understand that God had a problem with it. Today, God explains to Jane that He does not like abortion. CORRECT RESPONSE: Jane accepts the new information, changes her view of abortion to align with God's, and thanks God for helping her know Him better. If the possibility of getting an abortion comes up again in the future, Jane chooses not to get one out of a desire to please God. WRONG RESPONSE: Jane tearfully apologizes for the abortion she got six years ago, and starts searching for ways that she can pay for her terrible sin. Jane interprets God's conviction as a sign that He is angry with her for her past actions. Instead of feeling closer to Him, she feels rejected and condemned. WRONG RESPONSE: Jane refuses to accept God's view of abortion.
#2	Two years after Jim publishes a best-selling book about the Character of God, God shows Jim that a lot of the things he wrote about God were wrong. CORRECT RESPONSE: Jim accepts the new information and revises his personal beliefs. When future opportunities come up for him to promote his book, he declines and explains that his views have changed. Jim rejoices that God is giving him the privilege of knowing God better. WRONG RESPONSE: Jim panics and quickly writes a book which contradicts his previous one. He repents for insulting God and feels terrible for leading people astray. He starts groveling in his relationship with God, peppering his prayers with apologies, and imagining that God is holding a grudge against him. WRONG RESPONSE: Jim refuses to accept that his understanding of God is flawed. He continues to view himself as an expert on God's Character and gladly takes future opportunities to promote his book.
#3	After Bill's son has grown up into a violent criminal who is jailed for murder, God shows Bill that Bill's absence as a father did a lot of emotional damage. CORRECT RESPONSE: Bill accepts what God is saying and feels like he finally understands why his son hates him so much. Bill thanks God for teaching him new things, and he waits for God's instructions before attempting to make any more contact with his son. WRONG RESPONSE: Bill refuses to accept that he was less than an ideal father. He pretends to still be mystified as to why his son has such a hostile attitude towards him. WRONG RESPONSE: Bill feels horrible about being such a rotten father. He goes to the jail over and over again, begging his son to forgive him. He decides that he'll never be in a good place with God until his son accepts him.

CORRECTIVE CONVICTIONS FROM GOD

What is God's purpose?	• To show you why your PRESENT choices and actions are wrong, and instruct you on how you can improve them. • To confront willful rebellion.
What ACTION does God want you to take?	God will give you specific, clear, doable instructions on what He wants you to change about your current actions and/or attitudes.
What is God's attitude towards you?	• Positive IF He sees that you sincerely care about pleasing Him. • Negative IF He sees that you are trying to flaunt your disrespect for Him. (This is spiritual rebellion.)
What is the CORRECT way for you to respond?	Agree with God's assessment of your actions/choices and make the changes He is telling you to make.
Should you also repent?	• NO if you are not willfully rebelling against God. Simply agree with His assessment and do what He's telling you to do. • YES if you are currently in a state of willful rebellion. You need to return to a soul attitude of submission ("have Your way in my life") and do what God is telling you to do.
What is the WRONG way for you to respond?	• Refuse to agree with God's assessment of your actions/attitudes. • Refuse to make the specific changes He is telling you to make.

EXAMPLES OF CORRECTIVE CONVICTIONS

Specific action is required.

#1	As Teresa drives to an abortion clinic, God strongly convicts her that He does not want her to go through with aborting her baby. CORRECT RESPONSE: Teresa returns home and asks God to help her deal with her difficult situation in a way that will please Him. WRONG RESPONSE: Teresa pretends that she can't hear God and goes through with getting the abortion.
#2	As Stan is writing a book about the Character God, God convicts him that the content is very flawed and that Stan should abandon the book project. CORRECT RESPONSE: Stan drops the project and asks God to help him correct his false beliefs. WRONG RESPONSE: Stan gets huffy and refuses to obey God's instructions. He continues with his project, refusing to accept that any of his beliefs are wrong. WRONG RESPONSE: Stan agrees that there are errors in his teaching, but he publishes anyway because he wants the notoriety.
#3	In the midst of Tom's busy career, God convicts him that he needs to spend more time at home with his family. CORRECT RESPONSE: Tom agrees with God's assessment that he is away too much, and he changes his schedule to make his family more of a priority. WRONG RESPONSE: Tom refuses to accept God's assessment of his actions and insists that he's doing just fine. WRONG RESPONSE: Tom agrees that he should be home more, but refuses to make the changes God wants. WRONG RESPONSE: Tom grudgingly takes a day off and sits at home in a bad mood, then tells God that he's done his moral duty and resumes his busy schedule.